

THE KENOTIC THEORY OF THE INCARNATION IN MODERN BRITISH THEOLOGY

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A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



1955

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THE KENOTIC THEORY OF THE INCARNATION
IN MODERN BRITISH THEOLOGY

Being a Thesis presented by
The Reverend Charles Brown Ketcham, B.A., B.D.
to the University of St. Andrews
in application for the degree of Ph.D.



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the following Thesis is based on the results of Research carried out by me; that the Thesis is my own composition; and that it has not previously been presented for a Higher Degree.

The Research was carried out in
St. Mary's College, The University, St. Andrews.

Signed: _____

At the University of St. Andrews

August, 1955.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that Charles Brown Ketcham has spent nine terms in Research on the subject, The Kenotic Theory of the Incarnation in Modern British Theology; that he has fulfilled the conditions of Ordinance No. 16 (St. Andrews); and that he is qualified to submit the accompanying Thesis in application for the degree of Ph.D.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to acknowledge my indebtedness to the late Professor D.M. Baillie under whose guidance and supervision this Thesis was initiated and reached its outline form. In him I found one whose wisdom was 'first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity.'

To the Reverend Professor Edgar P. Dickie who, without hesitation or reservation, graciously consented to include in his already crowded schedule the many additional duties of Supervisor, I owe a great debt of thanks. His wise counsel and constant encouragement have been invaluable.

I should also like to express my appreciation to the Very Reverend Principal Charles S. Duthie who read the manuscript of this Thesis and made many helpful suggestions.

THE KENOTIC THEORY OF THE INCARNATION
IN MODERN BRITISH THEOLOGY

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BRITISH
KENOTIC THEOLOGY

Historical Background of British Kenotic Christology

The Kenotic Theory of the Incarnation is a modern Christological development the roots of which lie deep in the Lutheran-Reformed theological controversies which followed the Aufklärung in Germany.¹ Though the origin of the theory is thus recent, the origin of the terminology goes back to the New Testament. In the Epistle to the Philippians Paul says that Christ 'emptied himself' (ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν) taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men'. Thus all theories of the Incarnation which regard the 'self-emptying', the ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, as the central, determinative principle are termed Kenotic Theories.

Background

The rationalism of the Aufklärung, with its emphasis upon reason as an original source of knowledge

1 Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ, pp. 133-134. These controversies should not be confused with the celebrated Giessen-Tübingen controversy (internal to the Lutheran Church) which opposed kenosis to krypsis. In this controversy the debate was whether Christ, in the state of humiliation, abstained entirely from the use of His attributes (kenosis) or whether He used them secretly (krypsis). In neither case was it a question of the possession of the attributes (as in the modern Kenotic Theories), but a question of their use. Ibid., Ch. III.

affected both philosophy and theology.¹ It radically contradicted the traditional Protestant theology which maintained that God's revelation was absolutely given and that the employment of reason in dealing with it was instrumental and not critical and normative.² Even when such rationalism was recast by Kant to make room for faith, it resulted in "a new rational directive force",³ rather than a true synthesis of Faith and Reason. Such rationalism, even of the Kantian school, could find no real place for Christology,⁴ for it was "concerned not with a religion for which Jesus is the object of faith, but only with that which Jesus taught."⁵ In

1 C.A. Beckwith, "Rationalism and Supernaturalism The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. IX, p. 399, states: "The foundation of rationalism in English thought was laid in the scientific spirit introduced by Bacon and Newton, in philosophy by the Cambridge Platonists by reference to immutable and eternal truth, in theology by Samuel Clarke in his ontological demonstration of the being and attributes of God. As a distinctive phenomenon, however, rationalism began with the deistic movement, and was introduced by Lord Herbert of Cherbury..."

2 Ibid., p. 393.

3 Ibid., p. 396.

4 Ibid., p. 397.

5 Mackintosh, The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 249.

opposition to such rationalism, confessional orthodoxy developed into a supranaturalism of a most uncompromising kind.

With the publication of Friedrich Schleiermacher's Reden (1799) at the turn of the century, a new theological position was introduced. Schleiermacher emerged as the initiator of a school whose purpose was to mediate between these two extremes of rationalism and supranaturalism¹ - a school which accepted the best of eighteenth-century rationalism and at the same time affirmed, with marked mysticism², the dawning idealism of the nineteenth century. For this school the essence of faith was a God-consciousness which carries and is God's redemptive power.³ Christ is the perfect example, the paradigm, the ideal man (and nothing more) who is completely God-conscious and therefore completely pleasing to God. Standing in this same tradition, Rothe (1799-1867) sought to reconcile the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation with this Ideal Man Theory. "Thus Rothe⁴ speaks of God as incarnated

1 Walker, A History of the Christian Church, pp. 537-538.

2 Benn, The History of English Rationalism, Vol. I, p. 196.

3 Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, p. 97.

4 Lichtenberger, The History of German Theology in the Nineteenth Century, p. 492, maintains that Rothe was the most original thinker since Schleiermacher.

in Christ; quarrelling with orthodoxy only because it believes in an Incarnation limited to Christ, instead of teaching...that God is incarnate in redeemed humanity at large, and that in the Incarnation of Christ we have only the beginning of a process."¹

Thus the entrance of the nineteenth century brings with it a theological matrix so specific in its demands that it might be said to prefigure the Kenotic Theory; the Theory was an earnest attempt to find the middle ground between rationalism and supernaturalism, to effect a union between the Lutheran and Reformed Christologies, and at the same time to utilize the newly acquired benefits of Biblical criticism. It endeavoured "to secure a conviction that the subject of the experience of the central Figure of the Gospels is, as in the traditional scheme, identically the Eternal Word, the Second Person in the Trinity; and at the same time to do justice to the reality of the human experience of Jesus in its local and temporal setting while yet avoiding the seeming unreality of "one" Person living simultaneously in two realms of consciousness."² The Kenotic Theory found itself

1 Mackintosh, *Op. Cit.*, *En.*, p.222.

2 Creed, *The Divinity of Jesus Christ*, p. 76.

Also *The Expository Times*, Vol. XXI No. 3, Dec. 1909. "The Revival of Kenoticism" H.R. Mackintosh p. 105.

at home in a century dedicated to the discovery of the 'Jesus of History'.¹

Early Beginnings

The union enterprise which endeavoured to unite the two great bodies of the Prussian Church actually commenced as early as the year 1817.² This enterprise evoked a vigorous Christological debate in which the Philippian passage (2:5-11) figured prominently. The resulting Christologies were thus styled Kenotic³ and were offered to the Protestants as union Christologies. Both the Lutheran and the Reformed traditions could find logical expression of their historical Christological positions in the Kenotic Theory. "You may reach the Kenotic position from the Lutheran territory along the path of communicatio idiomatum simply by the inverse application of the principle; teaching with reference to the earthly state of Christ a communication of the divine properties to man."⁴ This same logical possibility was open to the Reformed tradition "along the path of the exinanitio to which the Logos became subject in becoming man, by assignin

1 See A. Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus

2 Bruce, Op. Cit., p. 133.

3 Mackintosh, The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 265.

4 Bruce, Op. Cit., pp. 134-135.

thereto a positive meaning, and converting the Reformed occultatio or quasi-exinanitio into a real self-emptying of divine glory and divine attributes."¹ Though this scheme for union of the two traditions was only partially successful², it served to stimulate a century of Christological debate from which all churches have greatly profited.

Although the Kenotic Theory, as it is now known, did not appear until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, some mention should be made of Zinzendorf, founder of the Moravian Brotherhood. He anticipated the Kenotic Christology by a century - in idea and centrality if not in logical form. "Zinzendorf conceived of the Incarnation as the assumption of a human soul with a body, and taught an indissoluble hypostatic union of the humanity so assumed and the Godhead."³ The kenosis for Zinzendorf was an absolute emptying and not just relative to the human sphere: "ἐκὺτὸν ἐκένωσεν; with His whole heart

1 Bruce, Op. Cit., p. 133.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 422. Bruce is here quoting Plitt: Zinzendorf - "Der Heiland hat von seinen Schätzen und Herrlichkeiten, die er als Sohn und rechtmässiger Besitzer τοῦ πᾶν hatte, schon disponirt, da er seine Gottheit verlassen hat bei der κένωσις, beim Hingang in die Zeit, in der Mutter Leib als das erste Grab."

He disengaged Himself from the work and activity of His proper Godhead...¹ This idea, however, was to be dormant for one hundred years, until Thomasius of Erlangen published his Beiträge zur Kirchlichen Christologie in 1845.

Thomasius' Beiträge was a rudimentary sketch of the kenotic idea, which he was to expand and formalize in his great work, Christi Person und Werk (1856). It is Thomasius who really deserves to be considered the father of the modern school, for it is from him that such theologians and divines as Kahnis, Luthardt, Delitzsch, and König received inspiration and guidance. Another German theologian who deserves mention as a formative figure is Wolfgang Gess. Influenced by Thomasius, but original in his own right, Gess greatly influenced such men as Gaupp, Hahn, Schmieder, Reuss, and Godet. A third Continental school was initiated by Johann Ebrard, also of Erlangen, and a fourth by the Danish Lutheran theologian Martensen. These are the names which stand out in Continental Kenotic Christology.²

Entrance Into British Theology

No exact date can be established when the Kenotic Theory of the Incarnation first reached Britain, but

1 Bruce, Op. Cit., p. 423.

2 For a detailed account of Continental Kenotic Christology see Bruce, Op. Cit., Lecture IV and appended Notes pp. 386-426.

there are four events which do seem to usher in a general interest and concern about Kenotic Christology. The first of these events is the publication in 1863 (a second edition in 1864) of A Charge, Delivered to the Clergy of Ossory, Ferns, and Leighlin by Bishop J.T. O'Brien. In the Charge, O'Brien supports the principle of kenosis without developing a complete Christology.¹ The second event is the translation of Martensen and Godet into English. Martensen's Christian Dogmatics appeared in Edinburgh in 1866. This was followed by Godet's Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke in 1875 (Fourth edition by 1881), his Commentary on the Gospel of St. John in 1876-1877, Romans in 1880-1881, and I Corinthians in 1886-1887. The demand and number are an indication of the awakening interest. The third of these events was Professor A.B. Bruce's Cunningham Lectures in 1876.² In these lectures Professor Bruce gives an excellent critique

1 "In it [Philippians 2:5-11] He seems to be shown to us, when in the form of God, divesting Himself of all that was incompatible with the state of humiliation to which He was about to descend - not holding tenaciously the equality with God which He enjoyed, but letting it go, and emptying Himself...of His divine glory, of His divine power, and of His Divine Omniscience..." Bishop O'Brien, A Charge, pp. 104-106.

2 These lectures were published under the title The Humiliation of Christ.

of the whole Kenotic movement on the Continent.

By 1881 a second edition, expanded, was printed.

fourth x The third event of great importance was Gore's essay "The Holy Spirit and Inspiration" which appeared in the collection of essays Lux Mundi in 1889. In the essay he states, "It is contrary to His [God's] whole method to reveal His Godhead by any anticipation of natural knowledge. The Incarnation was a self-emptying of God to reveal Himself under conditions of human nature and from the human point of view... He never exhibits the omniscience of bare Godhead in the realm of natural knowledge." As might be expected, this essay caused no little stir in Anglican circles, and Gore was engaged in public controversy.¹ By 1891 Lux Mundi was in its twelfth edition.² Gore, however, developed his ideas in the Bampton Lectures given in 1891 and in his Dissertations on Subjects Connected with the Incarnation published in 1895. From this point on, the Kenotic Theory claimed many apologists.

1 See Hall, The Kenotic Theory, p. 22.

2 J.K. Mozley, Some Tendencies in British Theology, p. 17, states: "Few books in modern times have so clearly marked the presence of a new era and so deeply influenced its character as the volume of essays by a number of Oxford men which was published in the latter part of the year 1889 under the title of Lux Mundi."

The Kenotic Theory of the Incarnation in modern British Theology has developed into four main types. For the purpose of this dissertation, one man in each 'type' has been selected to represent his particular variation of the Theory, and additional information and contributions have been added in notes. Because this subject is primarily one of theological interest, the various types of Kenotic Theory have been arranged in terms of theological development and not historical appearance. Consequently one anachronism does occur; for D.W. Forrest, whose theory is, to some extent, a criticism of Charles Gore's position, is discussed before that of Gore's.

CHAPTER II

A. M. FAIRBAIN

THE ABSOLUTE DUALISTIC TYPE

A.M. FAIRBAIRN

ABSOLUTE DUALISTIC TYPE

Principal A.M. Fairbairn of Mansfield College, Oxford was one of the first British advocates of the Kenotic Theory¹ of the Incarnation as the basis for Christology. In his work The Place of Christ in Modern Theology, Fairbairn takes a position which closely parallels the Theory first expressed² in its classical form by Gottfried Thomasius³ of Erlangen, Germany, and which is best classified as the Absolute Dualist Type of the Kenotic Theory. This parallelism is so striking that it would be redundant to discuss both Thomasius and Fairbairn separately. Therefore Fairbairn will be used as the basis of the discussion and will be supported in all important points by quotation from Thomasius.

In an age when Biblical criticism had begun to make great contributions ("Criticism has become so much a mental habit and has changed so many things that we find it hard to be patient with any process that is not critical")⁴ and the

1. A.M. Fairbairn, 1893. T.C. Edwards, 1895. C. Gore, 1896.

2. See Ch. 1, "Historical Background."

3. Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ, p. 138. These categories seem to have general acceptance and are derived from the nature and place of the Depotentiated Logos in each case i.e. to arrive at the classification of a particular man, Bruce asks three questions: First, is the depotentiation with reference to divine attributes absolute or relative; second, what is the relation between the depotentiated Logos and the man Jesus; and third, how complete is the depotentiation within the God-man. For a fuller explanation see pp. 137-138.

4. Fairbairn, The Place of Christ in Modern Theology, p. vii.

"Jesus of History" emphasis was dominating theological enquiry ("Biblical theology' means now the theology of the Bible We can now with reverence, yet with accuracy, speak of 'the Theology' or 'the doctrine of Jesus'"),¹ Fairbairn wanted to find some way of preserving the Biblical witness to Christ's Divine-human nature without losing the support of the early Church tradition or the contributions of Biblical criticism. "We must understand," he said, "the factors and forces that have moved and shaped the theologies of the past before we can, even in the rudest outline draw the ground-plan of a theology for the present."² (Im Zusammenhang mit der ganzen christologischen Entwicklung betrachtet, müssen wir daher das Chalcedonische Symbol als den richtigen Abschluss des Dogma bezeichnen.)³ The Kenotic Theory offered him just such a solution. By means of kenosis the God-man could be truly human and truly divine; not only would this satisfy the demands of tradition, history and Biblical exegesis, but also would give criticism a rational explanation of the humanity of Jesus and the Incarnation.

"But what to the Evangelists did incarnation mean? It meant the coming to be not of a Godhead, but of a manhood.

1. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 292.

2. Ibid., p. ix.

3. Thomasius, Christi Person und Werk, Bk II, p. 112.

("Das Lebensbild des Erlösers, wie es in den Evangelien¹ vorliegt, ist das Bild einer wahrhaft menschlichen Persönlichkeit, eines wahrhaft menschlichen Lebens, -² menschlich im vollsten und schönsten Sinn des Worts.")³ Its specific result was a human, not a Divine person, whose humanity was all the more real that it was voluntary or spontaneous, all the more natural that God rather than man had to do with its making. To the Evangelists the most miraculous thing in Christ was His determination not to be miraculous, but to live our ordinary life amidst struggles⁴ and in the face of temptations that never ceased."

"Hence Christ was to the Evangelists at once normal man and supernatural person - the former in all that pertained to His personal existence and relations, the latter in all that concerned His work."⁴ In all physical aspects Jesus was a man of the first century, who had had

1. Spaced words for emphasis.

2. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 13.

3. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 354.

4. Ibid., p. 355. W.S. Swayne likewise states: "But He came not merely to recapitulate in Himself humanity and human nature, but to be the Prophet of Truth, to declare and reveal to men all that they needed to know of God and the way to God. Love therefore impelled him to communicate to and through His Humanity a divine and infallible knowledge. It becomes at once possible to understand how ... He could know, being at a distance, that Lazarus was dead, while He could ask with perfect verity and sincerity, 'where have ye laid him?'"
Our Lord's Knowledge as Man, p. 42.

His home in Judea and whose actual, temporal history was recorded by evangelists and historians.¹ But He was a human being with a difference; though physically He was as every-one else, ethically and spiritually He was greater than all, for "The truth Christ revealed was not man's, but God's. The love that abode in Him was Divine. The life in Him was the created yet creative life. ("Betrachtet man das ganze geschichtliche Leben Jesu, so kann darüber kein zweifel sein dass es, obwohl ein menschliches, doch von Anfang bis zu Ende Offenbarung göttlichen Lebens und Lichtes ist. Diese Offenbarung setzt jedenfalls ein eigenthümliches Verhältniss Jesu zu Gott voraus.")² And so, when He acted not for Himself, but as the called of God (Heb. 5.10), His acts were naturally supernatural.³ His work was a unity, miraculous not at one point or in one thing, but in all things and at all points."⁴ In this manner ~~manner~~ we may see how Fairbairn rather ingeniously solves the difficult problem of maintaining two natures and yet personal unity. This common denominator which links man and God together, making such statements as naturally supernatural intelligible and making, to be sure, the Incarnation itself possible is Fairbairn's doctrine of

1. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 355.

2. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 17.

3. My italics.

4. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 355.

Divine Immanence "... God does not lose but rather realizes His being by His immanence in nature and man, and man does not cease to be but rather becomes himself through the presence and operation of the immanent God. (Voraussetzung für unser Verhältniss zu Gott ist jedoch die immanente Trinität nicht im Sinne eines blossen Postulates, das nur wir zu setzen genöthigt wären, sondern, was wohl zu beachten, als der objective Realgrund desselben. Es handelt sich ja hier keineswegs um subjective Consequenzen, sondern um thatsächlich Beziehungen zwischen uns und Gott, mithin auch nicht bloss um Verhältnisse des Christen zu Gott; sondern um wirkliche Verhältnisse und Verhaltensweisen Gottes zu dem Christen, um Thätigkeiten Gottes auf ihn und in ihm. Gerade auf diesen lebendigen Beziehungen Gottes zu uns beruht unsere Gemeinschaft mit ihm; erstere sind die causa efficiens der letztern.")¹

The natures are not contradictory or mutually exclusive, but their affinity or kinship expresses their reciprocal susceptibility. God is, as it were, the eternal possibility of being incarnated, man the permanent capability of incarnation.

1. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. I, pp. 68-69.

2. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 473.

Lawton, Conflict in Christology, pp. 137-138, gives this summary: "What is most important, most enduring, most significant, for God and man, is this inward nature which they share in common: what divides them is merely outward appearance, incidental attributes which refer only to time - not to eternity - to space and the circumstantial relationships between God and the world as it now is."

Using the above as basis and general description, Fairbairn moves on to a constructive development of the Kenotic Theory. The main difficulty, he states, lies in the conception of the Godhead, but there, as well, lies the solution. He endeavours to show that it was not God or the Godhead which became incarnate but only the Second Person of the Trinity, the Logos, the Son of God: "We speak of the incarnation of God, but it were more correct to speak of the incarnation of the Word or the Son. Jesus Christ is neither God, nor the Godhead Incarnate, but He is the incarnate Son of God. The distinction is cardinal; the Father did not become incarnate, nor did the Holy Spirit, ... but [an incarnation] only of the Son ... What was impossible to the Godhead as a whole may well be possible to the Second Person. For the Father could not be identified with man as the Son could. He was the ideal of the actual world; it existed in Him before it was; He was, as dependent and reflexive and receptive, the symbol of the created within the Uncreated; as the Object of eternal love and Subject of eternal thought, He was the basis of objectivity within the Godhead. And so it was but fit that He should manifest His ideal in the forms of actual being, exhibit under the conditions of space and time those relations of the eternal nature which the created natures were intended to realize."¹ (Dem Vater kann

1. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., pp. 475-476.

die Menschwerdung nicht zukommen, weil es die trinitarische Eigenthümlichkeit desselben ist, ewig in sich bleibend, Prinzip des Sohnes und der ganzen ökonomischen Heilsordnung zu sein; dem h. Geist nicht, weil es dessen trinitarische Eigenthümlichkeit mit sich bringt, den Gegensatz zwischen Gott und der Creature durch seine Immanenz in ihr zu vermitteln; hingegen der hypostatischen Stellung des Sohnes, des andern Ich's des Vaters, dessen Eigenthümlichkeit es ist, den Willen des Vaters hingebend zu wollen, und dessen ökonomische Wirksamkeit es eben desselbe ist, die Lebensgedanken des Vaters objectiv herauszusetzen, dem Sohne ist es entsprechend, Mensch zu werden; man kann sagen: seine trinitarische Stellung bestimmt ihn dazu.¹

Fairbairn's logical and explicit statement hardly needs expansion or clarification. He has expressed his doctrine of the Trinity relative to the position and function of the Son. For his development of the Kenotic Theory, this is a given; it, just as God's immanence, is presupposed, and no criticism of Fairbairn's thought is valid unless these first principles are taken into account.

The transition from Son of God to Son of Man demands kenosis. If the Son is truly to exhibit the "forms of actual being of space and time,"² then there must be a supreme

1. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, pp. 49-50, italics indicate spaced words.

2. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476.

renunciation on the part of the Son. This act of renunciation is the kenosis, the self-emptying of the Son;¹ the form of God is relinquished for the form of a servant. "This kenosis is precisely the kind of term we should expect to be used if the Incarnation was a reality. It must have involved surrender, humiliation."² One can see why Fairbairn felt it necessary to insist on a self-emptying of the Son, for otherwise the Divine nature with all its natural and inherent attributes would so overwhelm as to completely negate the human nature with which it is to be joined. ("Das Göttliche überragt dann gleichsam das Menschliche wie ein weiter Kreis den engeren, es geht mit seinem Wissen, Leben, und Wirken unendlich weit darüber hinaus, als das Aussergeschichtliche über das Zeitliche ..")³ "There could be no real assumption of the nature, the form, and the status of the created Son, if those of the uncreated were in all their integrity retained. These two things, the surrender and the assumption, are equal and coincident."⁴ (Indessen reicht der Begriff einer Assumption noch nicht völlig hin, um die geschichtliche Person des Gottmenschen zu

1. Philippians 2:5-11.

2. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476.

3. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II p. 141.

4. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476.

erklären. Wir werden noch einen Schritt weiter gehen müssen¹ bis zur Annahme einer Selbstbeschränkung des Göttlichen."

"... als Annahme der menschlichen Natur ist die Incarnation zugleich Selbstbeschränkung Gottes des Sohnes und umgewandt: die Selbstbeschränkung des Sohnes Gottes vermittelt die Annahme des Fleisches ... - beide Momente, der Zeit und der That nach zusammenfallend, sind vielmehr nur die zwei Seiten desselben Einen Aktes, durch welchen der Christus Gottes geworden ist."²) It is not a case of the Son scaling

Himself down until He finally reached human form but of the Son emptying Himself of those aspects (attributes) which by their Divine nature would overpower human nature.

Human nature and Divine nature must unite at a level at which the integrity of the two is maintained. Only then is there a true union of natures, a true God-man. Hence the Theory is called "Absolute Dualistic Type."

This discussion brings us to the question of how the exinanition was effected. Again Fairbairn starts from his conception of the Godhead. The essential attributes of the Godhead are truth and love, the ethical attributes.³ These are the attributes which determine the true, basic nature of the Godhead. (Indem er menschliche Natur annehmend

1. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 141.

2. Ibid., p. 144.

3. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476.

in der Umschränktheit menschlichen Daseins und Lebens zu existiren beginnt, ist und bleibt er ganz Er selbst: der Sohn Gottes, wesentlich eins mit dem Vater, das absolute Leben, die absolute Wahrheit, Heiligkeit und Liebe, dasselbe Ich, welches im Anfang und bei Gott war und Gott war. Es fehlt ihm nichts, was Gotte wesentlich ist um Gott zu sein.¹)

The physical attributes, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence are not essential to the Godhead but are essential to God, i.e. essential to the Creator-God who is in relationship to His creation, or are the external manifestations of the internal, essential attributes of the Godhead. "God acts," says Fairbairn, "as the Godhead is."² (Nichts desto weniger ist die Erniedrigung zugleich Entäusserung, fortgesetzte Entäusserung der göttlichen Seins - und Wirkungsweise, deren er sich mit der Fleischwerdung begeben hat, und eben damit der sogenannten relativen göttlichen Eigenschaften in denen die immanenten nach aussen hin sich manifestiren und zur Erscheinung³ kommen: der Allmacht, Allwissenheit, Allgegenwart.") The external attributes are under the command of the internal attributes - "The external alone might constitute a creator, but not a Deity; the internal would make out of a Deity⁴ the Creator."

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1. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 200. In other places, e.g. Ibid. p. 236, "der absoluten Macht" is included.
 2. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476.
 3. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 237.
 4. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476.

"Whatever, then, could be surrendered, the ethical attributes and qualities could not; but God may only seem the more Godlike if, in obedience to the ethical, He limit¹ or restrain or veil the physical." (So, als ethische, nicht als physische, That heiligen Gehorsams und erbarmender Liebe will die ganze Erniedrigung gefasst sein.)² The obligation which demanded such a sacrifice by God was, as might be expected, a moral obligation, the salvation of the sinner.³ (Erst der Eintritt der Sünde hat die Menschwerdung des Sohnes Gottes notwendig gemacht ...) "But," as Fairbairn continues⁴ "no such necessity demanded that each of the Divine Persons should every moment exercise all the physical attributes of God. And this surrender the Son made when He emptied Himself and assumed the form of a servant,"⁵ that He might save man. Fairbairn is anxious to point out (as hinted above) that the Incarnation does not so much limit as conceal God's physical attributes, just as "The physical universe

1. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476-477. See also W.S. Swayne, Our Lord's Knowledge as Man, p. 28.

2. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 236.

3. As mentioned earlier (pp.16-17), the bond which unites God and man is God's immanence which establishes a "reciprocal susceptibility" and makes such obligations possible.

4. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 477.

5. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, pp. 2-3.

6. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 477.

circumscribes the ubiquity of God,"¹ i.e. the Son of God has relinquished the physical attributes (but He, alone, has done so!) and become man, so that God's manifestation is at the same time God's concealment.²

The union of the depotentiated Logos with human nature causes no new problems for the theologian. "There is, in truth, no difficulty involved in His union with human nature that is not equally involved in His relation to material nature which, however, vast, is not so near the Infinite as man, and however old, had not so much of eternity within it as his mind."³ This union with human nature is a personal union based upon the ethical reality of God's immanence; the unity of personality which results is Jesus Christ, the God-man, in Whom each nature is fully realized through the conditioning of the other. "The person, to be real, must be a unity, for two wills or minds were two persons."⁴ (Sie gelten demselben Subjecte, demselben Ich -- und das nicht so, als ob dasselbe einmal als menschliches, das anderemal als göttliches, oder

1. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 478.

2. It should be noted here that the relinquishing of the physical attributes by the Son does not negate the triune nature of the Godhead for Fairbairn. The internal attributes of truth and love, the essential attributes, are left intact thereby. The essential nature of the Godhead is maintained throughout the Incarnation.

3. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 478.

als göttliches und menschliches gedacht wäre, sondern es ist dasselbe Eine Ich, welches sich des vorweltlichen Seins bei Gott und des innerweltlichen menschlichen Seins als seines zustandes bewusst ist ...) ¹ "But the natures, if He is to be qualified for His work, must be distinct. Only their integrity must not be developed into antagonism or incompatibility. The union within the Person is not a work of mere omnipotence, but expresses a real affinity, ethically mediated, though personally realized. And the natures in their union condition each other; because of their kinship a real and reciprocal communicatio idiomatum is possible. Hence by its union with the Deity the humanity is not superseded or diminished, but rather exercised, realized, and enlarged." ² (Was Christum als Menschen vor den Übrigen auszeichnet, ist diess, dass er da menschliche Wesen in seiner voller Reinheit besitzt; nicht als wäre er der Complex der ganzen Menschheit - er ist ein Individuum neben andern; aber weil er die ethische Vollkommenheit vor ihnen voraus hat, steht er auch als Mensch an Wesenstiefe und Wesensfülle hoch über ihnen; denn auf ihr beruht die volle Wahrheit und Schönheit der menschlichen Natur, auf ihr die klar Selbst - und Gotteserkenntniss, auf ihr die volle Macht über sich selbst und die wahre Lebens - und Thatkraft

1. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 24.

2. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., pp. 478-479.

nach aussen.)¹ "And by its union with the humanity the Deity is not discharged or lessened, but rather actualized, personalized, made articulate."² (Das absolute Leben, welches das Wesen der Gottheit ist, existirt in der engen Begrenzung eines irdisch-menschlichen Lebens, die absolute Heiligkeit und Wahrheit diese Wesensbestimmtheiten des Göttlichen, entwickeln sich in der Form menschlichen Denkens, und Wollens, die absolute Liebe hat menschliche Gestalt gewonnen, sie lebt als menschliches Gefühl, als menschliche Empfindung in dem Herzen dieses Menschen, die absolute Freiheit in der Form menschlicher Selbstbestimmung. Der Sohn Gottes hat sich ausserhalb der von ihm assumirten menschlichen Art nicht ein besonderes Fürsichsein, ein besonderes Bewusstsein, einen besonderen Wirkungskreis oder Macht besitz vorbehalten, nicht und nirgends existirt er ausserhalb des Fleisches (nec Verbum extra causam nec caro extra Verbum), er ist in der Totalität seines Wesens Mensch geworden, seine Existenz- und Lebensform ist die eines geistleiblichen, zeiträumlich bedingten Menschen. Hinwiederum, und das ist nur die andere Seite desselben Verhältnisses, hinwiederum ist die menschliche Natur ganz in das Göttliche aufgenommen und völlig von ihm durchdrungen; sie hat weder ein besonderes menschliches Bewusstsein, noch

1. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, pp. 208-209.

2. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 479.

eine besondere menschliche Willensbewegung für sich im Unterschied von der des Logos, gleichwie dieser nichts hat, was nicht unmittelbar der assumirten Menschheit eignete; in ihrem menschlichen Denken, Wollen und Können vollzieht sich das seinige.)¹

"For the work designed the manhood was capable of receiving the Godhood, and the Godhood was capable of personal union with the manhood. The perfection of the humanity while realized in time, expressed what was of eternity, - the perfection of the Godhood, not the physical attributes which belonged to the Creator, but the inner qualities, the hidden loves and energies which were ... the God of God. And so He was, in a sense, a double incarnation - of manhood and Godhood. In Him humanity was realized before God and revealed to man; in Him God was revealed to man by Godhood being realized before him."²

There is certainly much to approve in Fairbairn's approach to Christology. Not only has he accomplished the task he set for himself,³ but his exposition of the Kenotic Theory of the Incarnation has enabled him to make several new emphases in Christological thinking. Fairbairn's theory is well grounded in the Biblical witness to the life, work, and Person of Jesus Christ, for, as Bruce points out,

1. Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 201.

2. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 479.

3. See above p. 15.

"The very aim of the [Kenotic] theory is to show how the eternally pre-existent Son of God ... made Himself capable¹ of Incarnation after the manner recorded in the Gospels." All the evidence of this witness, however, has been tempered to strength by Fairbairn's use of historical and literary criticism. It is this emphasis which gives a certain degree of scientific support to the Kenotic Theory, which other Christologies have not merited.

In addition to supporting a Biblical theology, Fairbairn has kept within the limits of the traditional definition of orthodox Christology, i.e. that Jesus Christ is the Incarnation of the Divine Logos and has become the God-man by a perfect union of natures. This is important, for it has given those rationalists who have wanted to remain within the pale of orthodoxy and have wanted, at the same time, to maintain their integrity, a logical, scientific description of the Incarnation. Here, again the Kenotic Theory has the nature of a "union Christology".² Still within this framework of orthodoxy, the Theory has enabled Fairbairn to emphasize the humanity of Jesus. Jesus was a real man who lived the life of a first century Jew in Judea. He was a reasonable Being, limited to time, space, and normal development. He was a man who truly understood

1. Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ, p. 164.

2. See Chapter 1, "Historical Background."

human kind, for He was one of them; He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Such a sharp, vivid picture of the historical Jesus had long been needed to balance the supernatural; the two pictures must be held in juxtaposition, and Fairbairn felt the Kenotic Theory enabled him to do this.

Another emphasis well made by Fairbairn was that of the divine love revealed, manifested really, in the Incarnation itself. By the perfect union of natures, it was not only possible but the nature of Christ to manifest God's love. "In Christ, love and righteousness were incarnate."¹ By this Theory such giants of Biblical expression as "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son"² attain their true, full status. This great, incomprehensible love which motivated the Incarnation now is with the Son and thereby made accessible to every man in a new and glorious way. But such an expression of divine love is not effected without great cost - particularly to God Himself. The Kenotic Theory, with its emphasis upon Self-surrender of the Son, enables Fairbairn to give due emphasis to the sacrifice and suffering of God occasioned by the Incarnation. ".... man's evil and misery became the impulse to speak and to help; and what did all this mean but the disclosure of His

1. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 485.

2. St. John 3:16.

suffering by the surrender of the Son? But the surrender ... represented the sacrifice and the passion of the whole Godhead. Here degree and proportion are out of place; were it not, we might say the Father suffered more in giving than the Son in being given. He who gave to duty had not the reward of Him who rejoiced to do it. Though we speak but in the limited language of our own conditions ... must not the act by which the Son emptied Himself have affected and, as it were, impoverished the Godhead? The two things are coincident and inseparable; here pre-eminently, one member could not suffer without all suffering. The humiliation of the Son involved the visible passion and death, but the surrender by the Father involved the sorrow that was the invisible sacrifice .. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved¹ us, and set His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'²"

However, the degree of soundness of any theory is established more by adverse criticism than by favourable, and we shall now examine, first of all, the objections which² have been raised within the structure of the Theory itself. First, there is some question as to the logic of the kenosis described above. If the surrender of the physical attributes

1. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 484.

2. Some of the criticisms brought by A.B. Bruce against Thomasius are incorporated in the criticisms of Fairbairn. I feel that the great similarity in the thought of the two Kenoticists justifies this liberty.

and the assumption of human nature were equal and coincident, two aspects of the same Divine act, then a problem of logic does arise: how is it possible for the Incarnation, as assumption of human nature, to be an act of omnipotence, when, at the same time the Incarnation involves a loss of omnipotence through surrender of the physical attributes? Logically it is not possible for one act of will to have two such contrary effects.

1. See above, p. 20.

2. Bruce, p. 172. Though Bruce originally brings this charge against Thomasius, it is more telling against Fairbairn, for Thomasius makes a subtle distinction (perhaps wrongly) between absolute power and omnipotence: Die absolute Macht, wohl zu unterscheiden von der Allmacht 'welche die Bethätigung der absoluten Macht an dem Endlichen ist), ist der durch Anderes unbedingte, seiner selbst vollkommen mächtige Wille; sie hat das Dasein einer Welt so wenig zur Voraussetzung, dass sie vielmehr selbst der Möglichkeitsgrund für sie ist, sie ist auch nicht schlechte Schrankenlosigkeit, sondern steht ganz im Dienste des Willens, und schliesst daher, um diess sogleich hier zu bemerken, die Möglichkeit der Selbstbeschränkung ist nicht Erleiden eines Zwangs von aussen, sondern selbstbestimmung; Selbstbestimmung aber eignet der absoluten Persönlichkeit." Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. I, p. 54.

Such a distinction, however, does not solve the problem but merely pushes it back one step. If the Allmacht which is lost is the Bethätigung, how is union of the two distinct natures to take place? That surely involves "practice" or "practical proof." If it is argued that absolute Macht completely covers such an act, then there would be no reason for ever having or mentioning Allmacht.

Second, in this Theory there is a lack of continuity in the love which motivated the Incarnation: "The love which moved the Son of God to become man consumed itself at one stroke ... A mighty impulse of free self-conscious love constrained the eternal Son to descend into humanity, and in the descent that love lost itself for years; till at length the man Jesus found out the secret of His birth, and the sublime spirit of self-sacrifice to which it owed its origin, and made that spirit His own, said Amen to the mind which took shape in the Kenosis and resolved thenceforth to act on it, and so reunited the broken thread of personal identity."¹ For the span of childhood and early youth, the Logos was asleep or unconscious. Thus He cannot possibly have the empathy with children and youth which He has with adults - empathy for which His experience fitted Him.² "On this account," says Bruce, "one desiderates a way of making the Logos accommodate Himself to the human development otherwise than by depotentialation."³ Dorner, on this point of

1. Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ*, pp. 175-176.

2. "Christ is not simply a Teacher but a Redeemer, a Saviour. The Redemption of man and the fulfilment of his destiny is not wrought by a moral or spiritual union with God laid open by Christ, or established in Christ, but by a union of humanity with God extending to the whole of man's nature and maintained through death. While the writer to the Hebrews insists with the greatest force upon the transcendental action of Christ, he rests the foundation of this union upon Christ's earthly experience. Christ 'shared in blood and flesh' (v. 14), and 'was in all things made like to His brethren' (v. 17)." B.F. Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 59.

3. Bruce, *Op. Cit.*, p. 176.

continuity, says, "For if the Logos has given up His eternal self-conscious Being, where is His love during that time?¹ Love without self-consciousness is an impossibility. If, in answer to this, self-consciousness of the Logos is defended, a dual consciousness of the Incarnate must also be defended, for He would be self-conscious not only as a Divine Person but also as a man - simultaneously.¹ However, this contradicts what both Thomasius and Fairbairn have said about unity² and cannot be sustained.³ If it is maintained that this lost love remained with the Father and the Holy Spirit, this still does not explain or negate the lack of continuity in the

1. Weston, The One Christ, p. 119.

2. See above pp. 24-25.

3. Thomasius would answer such a criticism by maintaining that love was not lost but concentrated within the Incarnate - as concentrated power: "Denn die Potenz ist, wie schon der Ausdruck andeutet, nicht etwas Ohnmächtiges oder Leeres, sondern das in seinem tiefinnersten Grunde zusammen gefasste Wesen, die aus der Peripherie der Berechnung und Actualität in sich concentrirte unendliche Fülle, welche ebendeshalb die Macht ihrer selbst ist. Und diese Macht trägt auch das göttliche Selbstbewusstsein ..." (Bk. II, p. 243.)

Bruce, however, effectively answers this argument "Has this 'Potenz' power at will to radiate forth to the circumference of manifestation in action, or is it under a necessity of remaining at the centre confined to a mere mathematical point? If the former alternative be adopted ... then there is really no depotentiation, but only a change in the mode of manifesting and exercising power. If the latter alternative be adopted .. then 'Potenz', in spite of the protest of Thomasius, is practically equivalent to impotence." Bruce, Op. Cit., p. 174.

life of the Logos, but only makes one wonder why an Incarnation at all if love did not come down at Christmas.

Third, there is some question as to the effectiveness of the personal unity resulting from the union of the depotentiated Logos with human nature. If true unity is to be obtained and there is to be a true communicatio idiomatum resulting in one "I," then both natures must be of equal magnitude. Otherwise, if the human nature prevailed, there would be no real Incarnation, for all life would be completely governed by the limits of human nature and development;¹ or, if the Divine Nature dominated, the converse would be true, and the depotentiation would have happened in vain. Thus, to effect a perfect union of nature, the human and the Divine counterparts must be of equal magnitude. On this resolution Bruce comments: "To what purpose this duality in the life basis? Why two human souls to do the work of one? for, ex hypothesi, the depotentiated Logos is to all intents and purposes a human soul."² Instead of this roundabout process,

1. "This is the old Monophysite objection, although it may be urged in support of what amounts to a Monophysitism inverted, according to which it is not the Manhood which gives way, wholly or partially, to the Godhead, but the Godhead which gives way to the Manhood by the temporary abandonment of certain so-called divine "attributes."

Wm. Bright, The Age of the Fathers, p. 550.

2. In this claim, Professor D.M. Baillie agrees, by definition of terms:- "... He has divested Himself of the distinctive divine attributes; which would imply, if language means anything that in becoming human He ceased to be divine." (God Was In Christ, p. 96.)

according to which the Logos first reduces Himself to the dimensions of a human soul, and then associates with Himself another human soul, why not say at once the Logos became a human soul?"¹. In answer to this criticism, the Kenoticist might reply that the above argument would be true if only the physical attributes were being considered and not the ethical attributes which make the real Divine contribution to the union. But this answer is hardly acceptable, for the ethical attributes mediated by the immanence of God are the very basis the very ground and possibility of the Incarnation;² thus they would not really be a contribution but a common bond. Yet even if it were possible to argue that a distinction exists between God's immanence and ethical attributes, this still would not suffice, for the ethical attributes, just as the physical, would have to be scaled down in order not to overwhelm the human counterparts. Possession of absolute love, holiness, truth, etc. would surely never permit normal human development or development at all. J.S. Lawton makes an interesting observation which might well be mentioned at this point. In the theological method of both Thomasius and Fairbairn, there is a hint of Aristotelian Scholasticism with an almost particular precedent in the Thomistic doctrine of Transubstantiation: just as the bread and wine become the physical "accidents" of the flesh and blood, the Substance of

1. Bruce, Op. Cit., p. 177.
 2. Above, pp. 16-17.

Christ, so conversely, in the Kenotic Theory omnipotence, etc. are the "accidents" of the Godhead and can be surrendered without loss to the essence.¹ Thus in union with human nature the Divine Logos could divest Himself of all attributes and still maintain His integrity. However, two things, at least, argue against such an observation. First, both Thomasius and Fairbairn will have little to do with the Scholastics.² Second, if the Logos did so divest Himself of such "accidents" (attributes), He could hardly be divesting Himself of those distinctively divine attributes, which protect the integrity of the human nature. Surely to be joined with the very essence of God is to be completely consumed. Bright states the matter most clearly: "It is a mistake to say that He really parted with anything that was originally His; while on the one hand He did not deify His manhood, so neither on the other did He humanize His Godhead. For He retained, as the sixth General Council affirms, His Divine will and Divine activity, while He took to Himself the will and the activity of manhood."

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1. Lawton, Conflict In Christology, p. 145.
 2. "Von der Scholastik könnte man eher sagen dass sie rückwärts gegangen sei." (Christi, Bk. II, p. 124.)
 "The limitations that mark it [Scholasticism] belong to its world on the one hand, and its method on the other, but it is only when construed as a sort of belated ancient philosophy that it can be construed at all." (Fairbairn, p. 126)
 3. Bright, Morality in Doctrine, p. 193.

Fourth, criticism is brought against ~~the~~ form of the Kenotic Theory because it fails to deal adequately with the cosmic functions of the Logos. The argument in its classic form is given by the late Archbishop Temple: "What was happening to the rest of the universe during the period of our Lord's earthly life? To say that the Infant Jesus was from His cradle exercising providential care over it all is certainly monstrous; but to deny this, and yet to say that the Creative Word was so self-emptied as to have no being except in the Infant Jesus, is to assert that for a certain period the history of the world was let loose from the control of the Creative Word."¹ Fairbairn attempts to account for this by stating that there is no ethical obligation which demands "That each of the Divine Persons should every moment exercise all the physical attributes of God."² So it would appear that for the duration of the Incarnation, the cosmic functions normally exercised by all Three Persons are continued by the Father and the Holy Spirit. Yet this apparent solution cannot be maintained if Fairbairn's original Trinitology is maintained. "... the Father could not be identified with man as the Son could. He was the ideal of the actual world; it existed in Him before it was; He was ... the symbol of the created within

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1. Temple, Christus Veritas, pp. 142-143. Quick (Doctrines of the Creed, p. 136) points out that in so far as Temple makes this criticism of Mackintosh it is not valid (see Chapter on Forsyth). It is only valid in the more extreme Kenotic Theories of Fairbairn and Forrest.
 2. Above, p. 23.

the uncreated; ... He was the basis of objectivity within the Godhead."¹ This is a cardinal distinction and upon it rests the plausibility of Fairbairn's Kenotic Theory. Such a distinction also implies that the cosmic functions belong exclusively to the Son and could not be delegated to or assumed by the Father and Holy Spirit. Both assertions, distinction and delegation, cannot be made at once without mutually destroying each other. Even the principle opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa cannot be applied for it precludes the possibility of any such real or cardinal distinctions. The problem of cosmic functions is not satisfactorily solved.

Fifth, exception is also taken to Fairbairn's separation of moral and physical attributes. There is no acknowledged basis for such a separation other than arbitrary definition: "Physical attributes are essential to God, but ethical terms and relations to the Godhead. In other words, the external attributes of God are omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence but the internal are truth and love. But the external are under the command of the internal; God acts as the Godhead is. The external alone might constitute a Creator, but not a Deity; the internal would make out of a Deity the Creator."² Even with this as a "given," several logical problems result. If the physical, the external attributes of the Godhead are those by which He as Creator is in relationship with His creation, how could there possibly be any knowledge of the internal, the

1. Above, p. 18.

2. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476.

essential attributes? Or, if it is argued that God's truth and love are in some way expressed to His creation, are they not, too, external as defined, thereby obviating any such distinctions as external and internal? Again, if "the external are under the command of the internal"¹ and the external are surrendered, would there be any action at all? Would not the question then be: If God does not act, is the Godhead? J.S. Lawton argues against such a distinction of attributes from the necessity of unity in God's Personality: "It is regarded as gratuitous to assume that God may dispense with certain of His attributes, and not others, and still remain God. It is argued that God is a simple, indivisible unity; and being such, the various attributes which we ascribe to his nature are separable from one another only in thought, not in actuality. God's form, nature, and essence are of a piece - they too can be separated only in thought; and to suppose that the form or nature of God can be modified or changed is as ridiculous as to suggest that his essence can be mutilated ... the fact that God's omnipotence is in every respect conditioned by his love does not therefore imply that he can be divested of it: for whatever God chooses to do, whether to avenge or forbear, whether to create a world or redeem it, his every acti

1. Fairbairn, Op. Cit., p. 476.

requires his omniscient mind to conceive it, and his omnipotent will to carry it into effect; these are indispensable elements in his personality without which God is not God."¹

Sixth, Fairbairn's doctrine of the passibility of God has also occasioned criticism. As noted earlier² Fairbairn's acute sense of the sacrifice and suffering which God bore because of the Incarnation is one of the rich contributions made by his Theory. Yet he feels that in order to make such an emphasis at all meaningful, he must also admit and defend the passibility of God: "Theology has no falser idea than that of

1. Lawton, Op. Cit., pp. 140-141.

Weston, The One Christ, pp. 135-136.

"What manner of being is this who knows himself to be God, yet is destitute of the attributes of God? Attributes are not independent entities added to the being of God which can be laid aside without affecting his essence. They are only our analysis of God's essential nature. We cannot think away a single one without at the same time destroying God. If we start with an impassable gulf between God and man, no trick of logic will make it possible for us to bridge it."

William Adams Brown, Christian Theology In Outline, pp. 338-339.

2. Above, pp. 29-30.

the impassability of God. If He is capable of sorrow, He is capable of suffering; and were He without the capacity for either, He would be without any feeling of the evil of sin or the misery of man. The very truth that came by Jesus Christ may be summed up in the passibility of God."¹ Surely man's sins and man's salvation are of great cost to God, yet to say that God ispassible is to make God the Victim and not the Victor of pain and suffering. "In spite of all the sin, suffering, and tragedy of the world, God is not at the mercy of it all. He is not staggering under the load. His counsel is forever, and He is more than equal to all. This is the transcendent joy of God when man is lifted above himself and the world. Even Christ on the cross was not a thwarting of God."²

In addition to these specific criticisms of Fairbairn's Kenotic Theory, there are several general objections which can be made against the "Absolute Dualistic Type" of Kenoticism. First, such a theory presupposed a separation of the Trinity and could not be conceived or stated without it.³ In the thought of Thomasius and Fairbairn it is central: "... the Father did not become incarnate, nor did the Holy Spirit ...

1. Fairbairn, *Op. Cit.*, p. 485.

2. D.M. Baillie, unpublished lectures in Systematic Theology for 1953-54.

3. D.M. Baillie, God Was in Christ, p. 96.

but only the Son ... What was impossible to the Godhead as a whole may well be possible to the Second Person."¹ This can mean nothing but a real separation of the Persons of the Trinity.² "To assert," says J.S. Lawton, "that the Son can submit to a distortion of his nature without affecting the 'Deity' or the other Persons of the Trinity is virtually a denial of the dogma that all three Persons share the same essence and nature, which therefore cannot be divided, or modified in the case of one member of the Trinity."³

Second, in this particular type of Kenotic Theory, the Second Person of the Trinity, the Logos, divests Himself of

1. Above, p.18 (my italics).

2. In the case of Fairbairn, to say that the ethical attributes of truth and love maintain the unity of the Trinity (p. 42 footnote 2) will not suffice; for, if truth and love are the essence and belong to all Three (the other attributes being external and expendable), the Incarnation must be possible to all or to none - or there must yet be some deeper source of unity, of which there is no mention.

3. Lawton, Op. Cit., p. 141.

those attributes which are distinctively divine and becomes, in union with human nature, a true man subject to human growth and development both physically and morally. "It [Incarnation] meant the coming to be not of a Godhead, but of a manhood. Its specific result was a human, not a Divine, person ..."¹ Thus results a situation much like that before the Incarnation took place. God (at least Father and Holy Spirit) is still in the heavens and the Son Who came to earth ceased to be God and became a human person. Such a theory would tend to leave us with only an impoverished Godhead and no God-man.²

1. See above pp. 14-15.

2. "Such a correlation of the two natures as Kenoticist theories suppose, according to which the Son of God, on becoming incarnate, did in His divine sphere of being temporarily surrender certain divine "attributes" or perfections, would seriously impair our estimate not only of His work of redemption but even of the very nature of God."

Wm. Bright, The Age of the Fathers, vol. ii, p. 475.

3. "And, while thus adding a new nature to Himself, He did not in any respect cease to be what He was before. How was that possible? All the while He was on earth, when He was conceived, when He was born, when He was tempted, on the cross, in the grave, and now at God's right hand - all the time through, He was the Eternal and Unchangeable Word, the Son of God. The flesh which He had assumed was but the instrument through which He acted for and towards us."

J.H. Newman, Parochial and Plain Sermons, Vol. 3, p. 164.

X Raynolds

This is not a true Incarnation but a metamorphosis of one
¹
 Person.

Third, for Thomasius and Fairbairn, the kenosis is a temporary act confined to the period of the Incarnation. "The presupposition of the theory is that the distinctively divine attributes (of omniscience, etc.) and the distinctively human attributes (of finitude) cannot be united simultaneously in one life: that is why the Incarnation is explained as a kenosis. Therefore when the days of His flesh come to an end, Christ resumes His divine attributes, and His kenosis,
²
 His humanity, comes to an end. His human life is left behind when He ascends to the right hand of the Father. Thus on the Kenotic Theory in that specific sense (which is what we are concerned with) He is God and Man, not simultaneously in a hypostatic union, but successively -
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 first divine, then human, then God again." But such a

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1. "And, while thus adding a new nature to Himself, He did not in any respect cease to be what He was before. How was that possible? All the while He was on earth, when He was conceived, when He was born, when He was tempted, on the cross, in the grave, and now at God's right hand - all the time through, He was the Eternal and Unchangeable Word, the Son of God. The flesh which He had assumed was but the instrument through which He acted for and towards us." J.H. Newman, Parochial and Plain Sermons, Vol. 3, p. 164.
 2. Fairbairn has nothing to say on this particular point, but logically he would have to agree with Thomasius: "Er muss jetzt als der Erhöhte im Vollbesitz der Gottes herrlichkeit, deren er sich entäussert hat, ... stehen." Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 269.
 3. D.M. Baillie, Op. Cit., p. 97.

theory gives no place to the catholic doctrines of the permanence of Christ's divinity or humanity.¹

Fourth, there is an inconsistency in the entire logic of the Kenotic Theory method which makes some writers, e.g. Friedrich Loofs,² call the Theory mythology. Using a

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1. "... one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, in two natures, unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably ..." Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451. (My italics.)

"For although the boundless essence of the Word was united with human nature into one person, we have no idea of any enclosing. The Son of God descended miraculously from heaven, yet without abandoning heaven; was pleased to be conceived miraculously in the Virgin's womb, to live on the earth, and hang upon the cross, and yet always filled the world as from the beginning. Calvin, Institutes, Bk. II, Ch. 13, Sec. 4.

"The flesh of Christ, however, has not such power in itself as to make us live, seeing that by its own first condition it was subject to mortality, and even now, when endued with immortality lives not by itself." Calvin, Institutes, Bk. IV, Ch. 12, Sec. 9. (My italics.)

2. Friedrich Loofs of Halle. Lectures given in 1911 at Oberlin College, Ohio, as recorded in Expository Times, Vol. XXV, No. 1, Oct. 1913, p. 8.

A.E. Garvie, Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus, p. 517.

Ritschl, Justification and Reconciliation, pp. 409-411.

J.M. Creed, The Divinity of Jesus Christ, p. 77.

Wm. Temple, Christus Veritas, p. 143.

I.A. Dorner, Doctrine of the Person of Christ, Div. 2, Vol. III, p. 256.

Against the above authorities, Quick defends the idea of 'myth' in the Kenotic Theory. However, I think it only necessary to point out that the critics are using the term 'myth' with its secular connotation (i.e. unreal) and Quick is using the term with its sacred connotation (i.e. real but not historical).

"In so far as Dr. Temple says that the kenotic theory has a mythological appearance, we may indeed not only agree with him, but go further in saying that it is inevitably expressed in terms of myth. For myth is the only language we can use about supramundane realities, in so far as we think and speak of them in the category of action." Quick, Doctrines of the Creed, p. 136.

scientific, historical, and critical approach to the Scriptures in search of the nature and Person of Jesus Christ, the Kenoticists suddenly jump, in a manner logically indefensible, to a metaphysical speculation about the nature and essence of the Godhead. Even were it possible to establish scientifically that Jesus Christ was a Divine-human Being, this would in no way enable one to say "Therefore, the Logos, the Second Person of the Trinity was the only Person of the Trinity who could become Incarnate, etc." Such metaphysical speculation would seem to be guided more by the needs of the theory than by scientific objectivity.

CHAPTER III

D.W. FORREST

THE ABSOLUTE METAMORPHIC TYPE

DAVID W. FORREST

(Absolute Metamorphic Type)

In 1897 the Kerr Lectures delivered by David W. Forrest were published under the title The Christ of History and of Experience. In this volume Forrest not only shows that he is well acquainted with the Kenotic Theory and its literature¹ but also indicates that he feels the Kenotic Theory is an advance in Christology, with something definite to offer: "The service which Kenotic Christology renders is twofold: (1) It represents an advance on the Chalcedon symbol, in that it gives a truer impression of the New Testament facts and teaching as to the divine sacrifice involved in the Incarnation, and thus emphasises the very quality that endues the Incarnation with its power of moral appeal. (2) By insisting that the elements in Christ's character which verify His Deity are not metaphysical, but ethical and spiritual, it reminds us that the deepest qualities in God and man are akin, and that humanity is grounded in and reproduces the eternal sonship in God."²

Nine years after the publication of Forrest's Kerr Lectures, a second volume on Christology appeared, The Authority of Christ. In this work Forrest assumes an even more definite Kenotic position than in the Lectures. "Our

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1. Forrest frequently quotes or lists for support such people as T.C. Edwards, Gore, Gess, Godet, Ottley, Martensen, Fairbairn.
 2. Forrest, The Christ of History and Experience, pp. 203-204.

sole duty is to form as fair and accurate an idea as we can of the incarnate life from the accounts contained in the Gospels. That is what the Kenotic theory claims to do."¹ Many of the arguments and basic propositions are common to both books, but in the second the issues are more clearly cut, so that a consistent type of Kenotic Theory emerges. In the classification being used, Forrest's theory is the "Absolute Metamorphic Type," i.e. the Second Person of the Trinity, the Logos changes into a rational, human soul during His sojourn on earth, yet retains His divine identity. "'He remains who He was, though He has ceased to be what He was.'²" Though Forrest is not the only possible representative of this type of Kenotic Theory,³ he is the most systematic of the group, and his writings cover the broadest area. His two books which give evidence of a development in the eight-year interim are of great help, for they consequently display a direction of thought. This definitely reduces error of interpretation and gives proper weight to his statements.

One general observation ought to be made before considering Forrest's contribution. When Forrest was developing his own variation of the Kenotic Theory, *Κένωσις* used as the basis of a Christological system, was not a new idea. Thus his writing cannot be considered revolutionary,

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 96.

2. Hofman, Der Schriftbeweis, ein theologischer Versuch, as translated by Bruce, Humiliation, p. 407.

3. H. Goodwin or R.C. Morgan also deserve mention.

as Thomasius was revolutionary, but rather must his work be seen as a positive commentary on the earlier Kenotic writings. He knew the work of Fairbairn, Gore, Edwards, etc. and knew the criticism which was brought against their attempts. This material is the assumed background to Forrest's own development of the Kenotic Theory. Though he does not trouble to criticise the earlier writers systematically, such is the result by implication, of his constructive presentation.

Thomasius felt that the Creed of Chalcedon, A.D. 451, should be the theoretical monitor of all systematic Christological speculation.¹ Forrest, too, begins with the Creed, but takes exception to this complete confinement usually exercised in the name of the Creed. "When the Creed of Chalcedon, after repeating the declarations of Nicea and Constantinople as to Christ's true Deity and true Humanity, went on to affirm that the Incarnation was not the union of two personalities, a divine and a human, but the assumption by the Son of human nature in such wise that the two natures remained the same, without confusion yet without separation, in the unity of a single personal life, it was not attempting to explicate the method of the Incarnation, but to assert its reality. Had it been intended to make it more comprehensible,² it would have been a pitiful failure." In fact, Forrest is firmly convinced that the Creed, in regard to the method and conditions of the Incarnation, is clearly beyond all

1. Thomasius-Fairbairn Chapter, p. 14.

2. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, p. 193.

scriptural warrant.¹ It is true that the Creed safeguards the actuality of the Incarnation, but its authority should end there.² "Anyone can see that the Definition is not written 'with the eye on the object,' which is the incarnate life itself; that it is really controlled by abstract conceptions of Godhead and Manhood, which it proceeds to develop to the utmost, and then dogmatically affirms their coexistence in the unity of the Person."³ The Church's assertion at Chalcedon about the Person of Christ is an over-assertion.⁴

Chalcedon was not a natural development within the main stream of Christian experience but was the device of the Church to meet both the accusations and arguments of a pagan world and the searching questions of awakened, inquiring Christian minds. "When challenged as to Christ's person it [the Church] had to declare what it meant by calling Him both God and Man."⁵ Too often, however, the Creed has been accepted in an explanatory sense rather than in the declaratory sense intended by the Council.⁶ As a result of this misinterpretation there has been much avoidable

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 51.

2. Ibid., p. 50.

3. Ibid., p. 51.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., pp. 87-88.

6. Ibid., p. 88.

confusion in Christological speculation about the two Natures in Christ. Even the more recent efforts to explain the consistency of the formula in terms of the spiritual unity, i.e. "the idea of man as capax infiniti, essentially akin to God, rooted in Him, and only realizing the true and complete ideal of his humanity in proportion as he receives and appropriates the divine,"¹ does not solve the polarity (Divine-Human) expressed in the Chalcedonian Creed. "For however truly akin God's nature and man's may be in the spiritual quality, they remain none the less separate in their intellectual or metaphysical properties, in their type of consciousness. God in His absolute being cannot be conceived otherwise than as transcending time and space, as infinite in wisdom and in power. His knowledge is complete, all-inclusive, intuitive. Human thought moves from point to point, by acquisition and inference; and can only hold within consciousness at any single moment part of what it does know. No matter how real may be the affinity of divine and human nature, these two diverse methods or forms of operation can by no possibility coexist within the same conscious personality."² Forrest believes that the very purpose of the Kenotic Theory is to surmount this abstract opposition in which the Chalcedonian formula has placed the two Natures.³

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 88-89.

2. Ibid., p. 89.

3. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, pp. 197-198

Along with this theological rejection of the Chalcedonian formula on the grounds of logical contradiction and natural incompatibility is Forrest's basic rejection on the grounds of Apostolic¹ and Biblical witness. The Gospels do not support the contention that two full and perfect Natures "co-existed in Christ, or leave any dubiety as to which of them ruled in His case. However definitely they may convince us that He was none other than the Word, they make it abundantly clear that He was the Word made flesh, living, thinking, acting under distinctively human conditions. ...The person was divine, but self-restrained within the limits of humanity; His thoughts typically those of a human mind, His resolves those of a human will." Again, by maintaining in their totality the two Natures in Christ, the Chalcedonian Creed takes no account of the great sacrifice which Christ made in exchanging the 'form of God' for the 'form of man.' "The Gospels reveal something at least of what that sacrifice meant. They show that, however wide and deep His knowledge ... it was not omniscience. Still more plainly He was not omnipresent² Nor did He retain omnipotence."³ This use of the Biblical witness is characteristic of Forrest's empirical approach to the whole nature of the Incarnation.

1. Forrest, The Authority of Christ, pp. 89-90.

2. Forrest believes that the "'illocal ubiquity' which the Lutherans attribute to His humanity is as fantastic as it is incomprehensible." History, pp. 194-195.

3. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, pp. 194-195

In striving to secure the truth, he used the information and observation available to him.¹ "For the problem we have to solve is a concrete one, the right interpretation of a historical life. That the eternal Son as such possesses the properties of Godhead - omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence - does not in the least prove that He possessed them as incarnate; whether He did so or not is a question of the recorded evidence."² As it is from the Gospels alone that we derive our conviction of Christ's Deity, so the Gospels alone must decide what Deity signified in His incarnate experience."³

The Kenotic Theory is the one theory which seems to ^x fulfill the demands which Forrest makes. Its point of departure is the Bible, and it does do justice to the truth of the Incarnation as a real self-limitation of His divine mode of existence. Forrest's one complaint concerns the word Kenotic.⁴ "It is perhaps unfortunate that the word Kenotic, taken from the phrase of St. Paul, should have become the accepted technical description ... For it is apt to convey the impression that the truth in this matter rests on a particular exegesis of this single passage in Philippians (ii. 5-11). Nothing can be further from the fact. The Pauline expressions as to the self-emptying or self-impooverishment

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1. "This age is pre-eminently one of historical research, bent on discovering as far as possible the actual facts of the past." Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 96.
 2. "is a question ..." my italics.
 3. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 49-50.
 4. Ibid., p. 98.

(2 Cor. viii.9) of the Son only emphasise what the narratives of Christ's life suggest, and their elimination would leave the problem as presented in the Gospels precisely where it was." ¹ After removing this danger of restriction, Forrest accepts the term "Kenotic Theory" as the necessary, generalized, descriptive term for a Christology based upon exinanition.

The Incarnation which involved such limitation and real self-sacrifice did not just happen; such an explanation would be far too casual and superficial. God's reason for the Incarnation is evident in Scripture: "What, then, is the motive of the Incarnation as the New Testament views it? It was God's rectification of His moral world. All creation, which was but the working of His love, led up to man; and he who was its crown had ceased to reflect that love. The meaning of the whole created process was lost. The only means whereby its significance could be restored, and man lifted up to that filial relation to God which was the highest work of the Logos, was by the personal indwelling of the

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1. Forrest, The Authority of Christ quotes Principal Dykes for support - Expository Times, Jan. 1906. This view is also taken by Professor John Knox (Union Seminary, N.Y.C) in his book, The Man Christ Jesus. R.C. Morgan, God's Self-Emptying Servant, pp. 48-49, likewise states: "Yet He 'emptied Himself.' Not merely divested Himself - as Jonathan 'stripped himself of the robe that was upon him' Stripping and divesting relate to externals; emptying relates to the inward part. The incarnate God emptied Himself. Nothing is emptied while anything remains in it which is not itself. He divested Himself of his royal prerogative; He laid aside this outward glory. By taking the form of a bond servant He emptied Himself. Even if this had not been affirmed by the Apostle it might have been inferred from Scripture."

same Logos in a human life."¹ Not only the New Testament but also the testimony of our own individual response points to the Incarnation as a moral act of God (Christ was made man for our salvation) rather than an isolated, creative act of God.² Such an astounding Self-surrender of the Divine Logos only becomes reasonable when seen as the work of God's redeeming grace. This does not imply, however, that redemption is a moral obligation placed upon God by the rebellion of His people, as Thomasius and Fairbairn both asserted. Forrest maintains that God's redemptive work is both equally necessary and free, i.e. necessary because His Nature is love and free because His Nature is Self-determined.³ Thus the actual ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ maintains its great moral impact by its voluntary nature rather than by its coercion by the perversity of man.⁴

Love is not only the basis of God's redemptive work, but also the basis of the Incarnation itself, i.e. the

1. Forrest, The Christ of History And Of Experience, pp. 184-185.

2. "For while God's creative action is as really as His redemptive the expression of His love, it is not from the moral point of view so high a manifestation of it. His forgiveness of the disobedient is a greater revelation of goodness than His beneficence to the faithful. This is so absolutely; and it is doubly so relatively to us, the sinful." Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 343.

3. Ibid., p. 342.

4. Ibid., p. 90.

possibility of Incarnation.¹ Because mankind, the highest work of God's creation, is made in His own image, mankind naturally expresses a filial love to God. This relationship manifests in a physical and spiritual form the relationship² already existing in the Godhead. Thus our mutual sonship created by God's love becomes the possibility of Christ assuming flesh and blood. "Sonship is the ultimate principle that underlies creation, physical as well as moral. The material world would not exist if it had not its final cause and explanation in the spiritual. Sonship is the secret of its being Therefore the divine love cannot rest in its creative activity through the successive stages of the inorganic and animal spheres till it has embodied in its works the likeness of its inner character. God is essentially and of Himself perfect love; but love implies both a giving and a receiving - a double personality; and this double personality God includes in Himself as Father and Son, the originative and the dependent love. And as all creation is in its final

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1. H. Goodwin, Christ and Humanity, pp. 355-356, states:
 "This identifying power of love is no less the solvent principle of the Incarnation than of the atonement, which is the identification of a divine being with humanity, not by a transformation of the divine nature into the human, thereby losing His divinity; not by the transfer or addition of human qualities to His own - any more than human guilt was literally transferred to Him, or added to His innocence - but by His coming into the very conditions and limitations of humanity, through His participation of flesh and blood."
2. See below.

purpose but the self-projection of the divine, or the realization without the Godhead of that sonship which eternally exists within, it can only find its goal in a rational and spiritual being, who not merely receives but returns love in a conscious fellowship. The filial will in us is not simply our human response to the divine; it has its root in the divine nature. Man is made in the image of God because he is the analogue in creation of the uncreated Son, whose working is in him consummated.... It is this fact that makes the Incarnation possible. Though all created things have their ground in the Son, yet in inanimate nature or the purely animal world they do not express His character. Man does; because he can represent and reproduce the Son as a centre of free spiritual obedience and activity. Therefore the Logos can personally identify Himself with, and reveal Himself through, humanity."¹ Yet such an identification with man under the limits of time and space implies a *κένωσις*, a Self-emptying of the Son, for though created in God's image, "man still remains subject to the limitations of his finitude. He is present here, and not there; he appears and disappears with his generation. However far his knowledge develops, it is not omniscience."²

To discover just what the *κένωσις* of the Son of God involved, Forrest returns to Scripture. From the Gospels

1. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, pp. 183-18

2. Ibid., p. 190.

the most important fact of all emerges: the reality of the Incarnation. "What this humiliation meant for Him, what He surrendered by undergoing it, they [the Apostles] never attempt to estimate. That it signified an unspeakable cost, which was the expression of divine love, is the presupposition of all their appeals. They rest in the fact of Incarnation; they do not seek to define or explicate it in the region of Christ's personal experience."¹ It is true that in the Gospels Jesus of Nazareth is considered the Word made flesh, but the Apostles do not ascribe to Him all the prerogatives belonging to His Godhead. "Nothing surely is more obvious than that Scripture records assign to Christ a place in humanity in a definite historic succession."²

With the Gospel narrative an anchor from which he will not drift, Forrest examines the celebrated passage in Paul's letter to the Philippians³ as a description of the *Κένωσις* "Whatever interpretations may be adopted of detailed phrases in Philippians 2:5-11, the Apostle certainly does not mean that the Son in becoming man ceased to be divine. But in order to become man He made an unspeakable surrender of some

1. Forrest, The Authority of Christ, p. 87.

2. Ibid. p. 59.

J.S. Whale, Christian Doctrine, p. 99, says, "The fact which confronts us in the New Testament in all the wonder of its perfection is an actual human life, which was at the same time true human life. He was no phantom, archangel or demi-god, playing a human role on the world's stage, like Apollo in the halls of Admetus, in order to edify and inspire us, 'for verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but ... the seed of Abraham.' (Heb. 2:16)"

3. Philippians 2:5-11.

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divine prerogatives implied in the expressions οὐκ ἔρπαγγμόν
 ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ and μορφὴν δούλου
 λαβών [and] is it not clear that in the Apostle's thought
 these two μορφαί [θεοῦ and δούλου] are not conceived as
 combined but as radically contrasted, and that the assumption
 of the latter, the servant's form of existence, implied the
 renunciation of its antithesis, the divine form of existence
 or divine δόξα? In that case the μορφή Θεοῦ is usually
 regarded as essentially identical with τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ....
 He could not become the Incarnate Saviour of men without laying
 aside powers or prerogatives, the possession and exercise of
 which were inseparable from the divine state or form of
 existence." ² Forrest maintains that St. Paul in this passage

1. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, pp. 200-201

"If we confine our thought to the Incarnate life itself, probably we cannot interpret it better than by saying that it meant the renunciation by the Son of the metaphysical attributes of God - omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence for the fuller realization of that love which is the inmost nature of the divine. "At this point, Forrest refers to Fairbairn's Christ in Modern Theology, pp. 475-477 for support.

Henry Goodwin, Christ And Humanity, p. 358, likewise supports this position: "The essential nature of Deity, or the essential part of this nature, does not lie where we are most apt to conceive it, in those attributes that are furthest from our reach and comprehension, but in those that are nearest to us and within us, viz., the moral or spiritual; not in His eternity and infinitude, His omnipresence, omnipotence, and the like, but in His love. Those are the physical conditions under which He exists and holds relations to the universe - the equipment, so to speak, of His nature and sovereignty. This is His inmost and essential being. God possesses omniscience and almightiness; He is clothed with majesty, but He is love. Hence the former may be laid aside, or temporally relinquished without contradiction or detriment to His Deity. But God cannot renounce, or empty Himself, of love."

2. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 98-99.

is not writing with the technical exactness of a metaphysician, for such expressions as 'being made in the likeness (ὁμοίωμα of man' would then indicate an apparent rather than a real Incarnation. "The one thing perfectly plain is his [Paul's] central and dominating conception of the incomparable self-denial which Christ underwent in His assumption of humanity for our redemption."¹

Though Forrest does not commit himself to one specific statement about the nature of the Kenosis, he does quote with approval Bishop O'Brien's Charge 1863, p. 105: "'The Divine Word seems to be clearly exhibited to us there' (i.e. in the Holy Scriptures) 'as greatly changed'² in His union with frail humanity. Not only was all His heavenly glory laid by, when He tabernacled in the flesh, but all His infinite attributes and powers seem, for the same time, to have been in abeyance, so to speak. And by this something more is meant than that the manifestation and exercise of them were suspended ... It appears that there was not merely a voluntary suspension of the exercise of them, but a voluntary renunciation of the capacity of exercising them, for the time. This involves no change of His essence or nature; and no destruction of His Divine powers, as if they had ceased to exist, or loss of them, so that they could not be resumed."³ By this approved

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 99-100.

2. My italics.

3. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 93, fn.1.

quotation plus the above discussions on Paul and the Gospels, it seems abundantly clear that Forrest approves of *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ* as the explanation of how the Word became flesh. Because of Forrest's empirical approach, one can understand his hesitancy in dogmatising about an act which can only be the product of speculative deduction. The result of the *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ*, the humanity of Christ, is the important thing for Forrest, in any case. In short, then, the Son, the Logos, emptied Himself and became man, not by a union with human nature as Thomasius and Fairbairn argued, but by divesting Himself of those attributes which were distinctly divine ... This was possible because of the image-relationship between Creator and created.¹ Jesus Christ was Son of man and Son of God.

The Incarnation was real and not apparent, and the humanity assumed by the Logos was definitive and genuine. "So long as Christ was 'in the flesh', He was limited by its conditions. He was subject to the restrictions of time and space; He was here, not there; with definite relations to the people beside Him which He did not sustain to those outside that circle. The influence also which He exerted over them was of the same type as that which we exercise over one another. It was the effluence of a personality as expressed through the usual physical media of words, acts,

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 183-184.

and bearing."¹ Not only did His Physical life conform to human limits, but His intellectual and moral life did as well - as the Gospels put beyond dispute. This does not, as mentioned earlier,² deny His divinity but rather recognises that His divinity was Self-restrained within the limits and conditions of humanity.³ Such a restriction is even applied to his own Self-recognition as the divine Logos: "The Incarnate retained indeed His consciousness of Deity, knew Himself to be the Eternal Son, but never broke through the restriction of the human nature which He had voluntarily assumed."⁴

If Christ's humanity is so confining, in what way is the divine manifest in the Incarnate life? Is it possible for God to be God under such circumstances? Forrest maintains that there are two "elements" in His personality which differentiate Him from His fellow men and impel us to acclaim Him as the Incarnate Son. The first of these is sinlessness and the second, Lordship or Mediatorship. Under the above circumstances, "His sinlessness means that He did not at any point of His progressive experience deflect from the specific ideal of service set before Him by God."⁵ This is not to imply that His moral perfection was superhuman and complete from the start; it was, rather, a perfection proper to each time and circumstance of His life.⁶ This sinlessness

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 348-349.

2. Above, p. 59.

3. Forrest, Op.Cit., p. 100.

4. Ibid., p. 90.

5. Ibid., p. 12.

6. Ibid., p. 12.

definitely points to a unique filial consciousness for its maintenance. The second element of differentiation, His Lordship, is marked by Christ's unique spiritual authority and power - "Not that the noumenal in Christ, the essentially divine, is discerned at any point as something separate from or lying alongside the phenomenal; it appears as phenomenal, but it gives the phenomenal such a unique significance and result as to suggest and guarantee absolute reality. The divine is never there pure and simple, either in his words or acts, but always clothed in the human working through the processes of human thought as truly as it expresses itself in human language."¹ This "element," too, points to a unique filial consciousness in Christ. This filial consciousness becomes the very heart of Forrest's argument. The one, fundamental characteristic which enables Jesus Christ to be called a man and at the same time the Incarnate Son of God is His "'unique capacity of receiving' from the Father ..."² This capacity is not paranormal but rather of the true nature of perfect, human sonship. It is Christ's human perfection which argues for His divinity. ".... the prerogative of power which He possessed reveals 'the unexplored truth of human nature, whose relation is perfected with God,'³ and thus belongs to humanity in its truly normal or ideal state, yet the fact that His human

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 37-38.

2. Ibid., p. 85.

3. Ibid., quoted from Moberly, Atonement and Personality, p. 102.

nature alone was normal in an otherwise abnormal race argues in Him a special interposition of God, and the presence of the divine in a supreme and transcendent sense.¹ By his human perfection, by the completeness with which He embodies the divine in humanity, He verifies Himself as Son of God.²

It is evident that Forrest has made a great effort to present the Kenotic Theory in an acceptable light. With his knowledge of the previous Kenotic Christologies and the adverse criticism which they evoked, he offers his explanation of points which he believes are critical. This he seeks to accomplish without the loss of the important advantages general to all the Kenotic theories.

Forrest is prepared to accept all the help that Biblical criticism can offer him. He rightly perceives that the objective, factual material of the Bible, when correctly understood, can only help one's understanding of the mysteries of faith and not hinder it.³ This use of Biblical Criticism is part of the empirical approach which Forrest assumes

1. Forrest, The Authority of Christ, p. 86.

2. Ibid., p. 85. Henry Goodwin, Christ And Humanity, pp. 359-360 agrees with this position: "The Incarnation, in fact, consisted in a divine being coming under, and being subject to, all human laws and conditions - and becoming thus a true and real man. What was supernatural in Him, as His character and miracles, are not to be summarily pronounced superhuman, or relegated to His divinity in distinction from His humanity, but admit at least of the question whether they do not belong to that ideal and perfect humanity which Christ came to realize, and which is yet to be realized by His human brethren."

3. Ibid., p. 96.

throughout his enquiry, and prevents him from falling into some of the speculative errors of Thomasius, Fairbairn and Gore.¹ Thus Forrest makes no dogmatic statements about the how of the *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ* but rests in the fact of the Incarnation which, logically, demands some sort of *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ*. This fact of the Incarnation is the man Jesus who is revealed to us in Scripture. He is definitely a man;² his humanity is genuine. He is limited in all respects as we are limited.³ Such an exinanition is not without great cost to God the Father who 'gave His only begotten Son' and to God the Son who 'though He was rich, yet ... became poor.'⁴ Forrest believes the Kenotic Theory gives proper emphasis and expression to God's great act of redemption and love. God's sacrifice is the "very quality that endues the Incarnation with its power of moral appeal,"⁵ and signifies with what seriousness God

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1. For example, in Fairbairn's Theory, there is the confusion which results from omnipotence willing itself impotent.
 2. Forrest, in a footnote in Christ of History, pp. 183-184, says, "The Son in assuming manhood, became not only a Man but Man; and thus the Incarnation has a universal significance." This point is not developed, however, and one gathers that the implication is universality through true individuality, e.g. as Shakespeare's Iago, so carefully drawn, awakens the recognition of "the Iago" in all of us.
 3. See above, pp. 162-163.
 4. "Any acknowledgement which falls short of this confession of Christ's essential Deity, which does not recognise that He was in a transcendent sense one with the Father, and that His self-sacrifice meant a sacrifice undergone by the divine nature itself, fails to do justice to the significance of His personality." Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 49.
 5. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, p. 203.

considers sin: "... the depth and riches of God's love can never be conceived aright by him who does not know something of the unspeakable surrender which God Himself made in order to achieve the reconciliation. Without this, sin is not seen in its essential darkness and destructive force, and the mercy of God loses for us its irresistible attraction and final glory." ¹ This emphasis on the ethical aspect of God's sacrifice is further supported by Forrest's insistence that God's act is free. Sin might necessitate salvation, but it is within God's free, self-determined nature to choose such a course of action.

The above points of emphasis have been made to a greater or less extent by the previous Kenotic theorists, but there are certain innovations which Forrest makes. First, there is a definite attempt in this theory to escape the logical contradictions involved in any "hypostatic union." ² Man, created in the image of God, shares his moral and spiritual sonship with Christ. Man is the "analogue in creation of the uncreated Son." ³ Therefore it is not necessary for Forrest, as it was for Thomasius and Fairbairn, to speak of the Logos' union with human nature, but Forrest could speak of the Son becoming man directly by emptying Himself. Such a theory does give continuity to the whole of the created world and does avoid the problem of the two Natures.

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 40.

2. See Fairbairn in loc.

3. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, p. 183.

At the same time, by so designating our sonship, Forrest is able to express the greatness of God's love for his creation.

Second, Forrest avoids the dualism which marks the theories of Edwards and Gore by maintaining that in Christ there was only one centre of consciousness, one personality - that of the Word made flesh.¹ Empirically one is able to make no other assertion, for "Whenwe speak of two minds or two wills as united in His person, we are not reading from the facts."² Even Gore's explanation of Christ, who by nature must remain in some measure God, living from two centres is not satisfactory to Forrest. In fact it is this dualism he is trying to avoid: "Is it not, however, rather extravagant to regard this an an instance of a personality living from two different centres? In any case, the centres are necessarily inter-related, which implies some bond or principle of unification. How, then, do they illustrate the two non-communicating consciousnesses of the Logos?"³ If the Incarnation and the *KÉΛΩΣΙΣ* are to have any real meaning, there must be only one centre of consciousness. "It is quite 'unscriptural, though the practice is supported by strong patristic authority, to regard the Lord during His historic life as acting now by His human, and now by His divine nature only." What He does, He does with His whole

1. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, p. 199.

2. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 89-90.

3. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, p. 203.

personality. It is the same unity of personal life which is present throughout. This is the unquestionable impression left by the records. In no case does He speak or act merely as God or merely as man, but in all cases as God manifest in flesh."¹ Such singleness of consciousness and unity of personality do not destroy the divinity of Christ; Forrest states, "The Incarnate retained indeed His consciousness of Deity, knew Himself to be the Eternal Son, but never broke through the restrictions of the human nature which He had voluntarily assumed."² This argument minimizes any Self-awareness of a metaphysical nature and emphasizes the spiritual and moral aspects of Christ's awareness. For Forrest such a view is closer to the actual facts of the situation. He believes that if one treats the "words of our Lord regarding Himself as spoken primarily in a religious rather than a metaphysical sense it ... [would] be exegetically correct, and ... [would] give a true reading of His actual consciousness."³

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 54, and quoting Westcott, Epistle to the Hebrews, p.66.

2. Ibid., p. 90.

Earlier, in The Christ Of History And Of Experience, p. 200 Forrest maintained that "the 'inalienable ego' who lived and thought under true human conditions knew Himself to be the Son who dwelt in the glory of the Father before the world was; knew therefore that the very essence and principle of all sonship was itself incarnate in Him. And it was because He was conscious of this that His self-disclosure necessarily took the form of a self-assertion which could not belong to a normal sinless humanity." This is obviously a more primitive statement which involves Forrest in definite metaphysical problems, but it does serve to illustrate and emphasize the direction of Forrest's thought.

3. Ibid., pp. 35-36.

Third, Forrest is able to speak, without confusion, about the humanity of Christ in relationship with God the Father. Because Christ's fundamental characteristic is His unique capacity of receiving, Forrest is able to assert without reservation the integrity of Christ's humanity. Somewhat paradoxically, it is the completeness and perfection of Christ's humanity which argue most for His divinity. "The emphasis which He puts on His own personality is an assertion, not of His independence of the Father, but of the ontireness of His dependence upon Him, of the perfect response which He is conscious that He alone offers to the Father's will, and by virtue of which He holds a unique supremacy over men."¹ He is normal in an otherwise abnormal race, and such normality signifies the "presence of the divine in a supreme and transcendent sense."²

This consistency in Forrest's theory is generally, but not completely, true. Though he does advocate the employment of critical-empirical methods, there are two arguments based upon sheer speculation, which cannot be supported. The first argument concerns the expression and nature of God's love: "For while God's creative action is as really as his redemptive the expression of His love, it is not from the moral point of view as high a manifestation of it. His forgiveness of the disobedient is a greater revelation of

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 84-85.

2. Ibid., p. 86.

goodness than His beneficence to the faithful. This is so absolutely; and it is doubly so relatively to us, the sinful.¹ To draw attention to the fact that God's creative and redemptive work represent two different manifestations of God's infinite love is quite understandable, but to maintain that these two expressions vary in degree as well as kind is surely speculative to an excess. To state so positively that one expression of love is greater than another - even morally speaking - is to assert more knowledge than is available. One would have to claim access to thoughts which are not like our thoughts and ways which are not like our ways before such intimate and immediate knowledge could be advanced as argument.² The redemptive expression of God's love is wonderful beyond all comprehension, and this in itself would exclude comparison. No less can be said of His creative acts. 'Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.' (Ps. 145:3); The second speculative argument concerns the nature and inter-relation of the Trinity: "God is essentially and of Himself perfect love; but love implies both a giving and a receiving - a double personality; and this double personality God includes in Himself as Father and Son, the originative and the dependent love."³ This speculation has three grave consequences:

1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 343.

2. E. Brunner in the Mediator, p. 349, fn. 1, says, "It was the error of the Kenosis doctrine ... that it tried to give a psychology of the God-man."

3. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, p. 183.

(a) it implies that God the Father is not essentially and of Himself love, which denies the very basis upon which Forrest is building. Rather it is true that God needs love, needs relationship to be complete; therefore the "originative" necessitates the "dependent" love.¹ Only then, by Forrest's above argument, is it possible to have love in God. (b) If God's love implies a double personality, and if God is, as a result, perfect love,² then there can be little or no reason, in the final analysis, for the Holy Spirit. (c) This statement about the nature of love also implies that God is not all-in-all: He is not self-sufficient but requires Another to fulfill the love relationship. This dependent Other cannot ex hypothesi be of His very "essence", for if It were, the act of love would be duplicated. Such duplication would preclude any true giving and receiving. This argument of Forrest's puts a limit upon God's Being. Even should one agree to subordination in the Godhead (see below), that would not in the least negate the above three observations.

There is one further problem which arises in connection with the perfection of humanity which Forrest ascribes to Christ. If Christ was in all ways human,³ how was it possible

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1. If Forrest's "double personality" indicating two separate functions means anything, it must mean such a distinction.
 2. Forrest, The Christ Of History And Of Experience, p. 183.
 3. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, pp. 348-349.

for Him to be conscious of Deity? In an earlier passage Forrest stated: "The Incarnate retained indeed His consciousness of Deity, knew Himself to be the Eternal Son, but never broke through the restrictions of the human nature which He had voluntarily assumed."¹ But is such Self-consciousness even possible? How was it possible, under the circumstances, for Him to be conscious of Deity in any way? Such consciousness, by its very nature, would still imply divine capacity in some sense,² and this in no way could be compatible with true humanity. Again, if Forrest were able to maintain this position, he would, ultimately, confront the same problem of the union of Natures, which troubled Thomasius and Fairbairn and which Forrest has specifically tried to avoid himself.³

The above criticisms pertain to inconsistencies within Forrest's system, but equally severe problems arise if the theory is used as the basis for a formal and integrated Christology. Because of the nature of the *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ* and the resulting Incarnation, Forrest is forced to adopt a

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1. Forrest, The Authority Of Christ, p. 90.
H. Goodwin at this point would disagree and would maintain that in becoming man God renounced His deific consciousness. Christ And Humanity, p. 355.
 2. Bruce, Humiliation, p. 187, says about the Continental Kenoticist Gess at a similar point: "Contact with flesh is fatal to the free, conscious life of God; it is a plunge into a Lethe stream, which involves loss of self-consciousness, and therewith of the divine attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and even of eternal holiness."
 3. Above, p. 68.

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subordination view of the Trinity. The divine Logos, the Son, empties Himself and is changed (or reduced) into a man. His life as man is completely confined by the normal limitations inherent in all flesh, and the exercise of all his divine powers is relinquished. That means that if God is yet to rule, control, and govern the whole of creation and at the same time sustain the fact of the Incarnation, He must still remain God in all his fulness and majesty. Forrest maintains that this is possible, for it is only the Son who is Incarnate and not God the Father. God the Father, the originative love, is able to relinquish, for a time, God the Son, the dependent love. What has occurred is the intensification of the dependence of the Son upon God the Father. This subordination view of the Trinity, as propounded by Forrest, gives rise to at least four possible problems: (a) If God the Son so impoverished Himself as to become a human being limited in all ways as we are limited and dependent upon God as we are dependent upon God, then would there, indeed be an Incarnation at all? Would there not be, as Professor Baillie suggests, a pagan metamorphosis - the creation of another man - rather than God dwelling

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1. See discussion on pages 56-8 above with this additional fact in mind: that the three Persons were distinct enough for only one to become man. Unless this is conceived as Subordinationism, it would have to be Tritheism. However from the time of Israel, Monotheism has been at the very centre of religious conviction. 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.' (Deut. 6:4).

with us.¹ Tradition, also, does not support such a theory of metamorphosis; in fact, it is specifically against such a view that the 'Athanasian Creed' speaks; "Who, although he be God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; one, not ² by conversion of the Godhead into Flesh, but by taking of ³ the manhood into God." (b) Were it possible to disregard Professor Baillie's arguments, Forrest would still have to face a further problem before establishing the reality of the Incarnation. The Son, who became Incarnate, is subordinate

1. H. Goodwin, Christ And Humanity, p. 357 arrives at substantially the same conclusion: "It is conceivable that the self-diremptive act by which the Son emptied Himself of His equality with God was only a partial withholding of that divine energy or self-communication on the part of the Father which is termed eternal generation. In other words, it is conceivable that there is in the Godhead the same power and capacity for the Logos to empty Himself, or reduce His divinity to the form and limitations of humanity, as there is for its eternal derivation and continuance in the form of God."
2. D.M. Baillie, God Was In Christ, pp. 96-97:
 "If, however, the Kenoticist ... regards Jesus as in every sense a man, a human person ... then the situation becomes still stranger. The Kenoticist would then be involved in saying that He who before the Incarnation had been a divine Being now turned into a man, with human instead of divine attributes, for the time. He had been God, but now He was a man. If taken in all its implications, that seems more like a pagan story of metamorphosis than like the Christian doctrine of Incarnation, which has always found in the life of Jesus on earth God and man in simultaneous union - the Godhead 'veiled in flesh' but not changed into humanity."
 See also A.J. Mason, The Faith of the Gospel, p. 138.
3. My italics.

to and dependent upon the Father; thus it is not really God but dependent love which has become Incarnate. It is not a true Incarnation in the Christian sense, but a love Token from God to man. The Word which was with God became flesh, but not the Word which was God. God, Himself, remains over and above it all.¹ (c) The great creeds and traditions of the Church have never supported a view of the Trinity,

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1. "Jesus Christ on this theory may be 'Very God' He is certainly not 'Perfect God.'" J.M. Creed, The Divinity of Jesus Christ, p. 79.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' (John 1:1).

Nicene Creed: 'But those who ... affirm that the Son of God is of another substance or essence ὑποστάσεως ἡ οὐσίας) or is created, or mutable, or variable - these men the catholic and apostolic Church of God anathematizes.

Calvin, Institutes, Bk. I, Ch. 13, sec. 7: "But the clearest explanation is given by John, when he states that the Word which was from the beginning, God and with God (my italics), was, together with God the Father, the maker of all things."

"The doctrine of the Incarnation asserts that Christ is both God and Man. We do not understand this as implying that Jesus acted in two alternating capacities - now as God and now as Man - but rather that in all His actions and experiences He is both God and Man." Doctrine in the Church of England, p. 73.

"The Church affirmed both Natures each in its completeness and the reality of their union." Ibid., p. 74.

which has involved Subordinationism¹ - as the fourth century struggle against Arianism makes explicit. There is, however, one strand of Christian tradition, which adopts a "social" view of the Trinity, i.e. three personalities in one Godhead or a unity of three Persons. This tradition starts with the Cappadocian Fathers and finds support among such Anglican scholars as Professor Clement Webb² and Professor Leonard Hodgson.³ Forrest by theory if

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- 1 Quicunque Vult: "So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord; and yet not three Lords, but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord, so are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say, there be three Gods, or three Lords."

Calvin, Institutes, Bk. 1, Ch. 13, Sec. 17: "The words, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, certainly indicate a real distinction, not allowing us to suppose that they are merely epithets by which God is variously designated from his works. Still they indicate distinction only, not division. (my italics). This is a carefully drawn statement to avoid the danger of Modalism on the one hand and Subordinationism (logically Polytheism) on the other. Whale, J.S., Christian Doctrine, p. 119: "God is One. The doctrine of the Trinity excludes any activity on the part of the Son or the Spirit which is not equally the work of the Father..."

- 2 Professor Clement C.J. Webb, God and Personality, Gifford Lectures, 1918.
- 3 Professor Leonard Hodgson, The Doctrine of the Trinity, Croall Lectures, 1943.

not by desire does not belong to this latter tradition,¹ and a distinction between the two should be made: for Forrest (Subordinationism) the Father alone possesses aseity,² for the Cappadocians (social Trinity) all Three are co-equal and co-eternal.³ Even were it possible to show that Forrest supported the social rather than the subordination concept of the Trinity, he would have to answer the problem which Professor D.M. Baillie

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- ¹ In The Christ of History and of Experience, p. 439, Forrest states: "Now the Christian conception of God as a 'society in Himself', - as not a simply unity, but a unity that includes difference, - mysterious though it may be, answers to these ultimate forms, personality and love. God's life contains within itself the conditions which lie at the root of both and which in human experience imply mutually exclusive individualities." (My italics). However, Forrest, if he is to maintain a Kenotic position, is unable to maintain the above assertion (see below, fn. 2). Because of the nature of the exinanition, the Logos as dependent love, the Incarnation of the Son rather than the Father, Forrest cannot stop with a 'social Trinity' but must adopt Subordinationism.
- ² Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ, pp. 150-151, in criticizing Gess states that the Subordination view is necessary for the Kenoticist. "The Father alone possesses the property of being from Himself (aseity). The Son, indeed, also hath life in Himself; but it is as a gift of the Father's eternal love. If the relation between the persons were one, according to which they were all mutually conditioning and conditioned, then the Kenosis would either be impossible, or
- ³ it would imperil the Godhead of the Father."
Over page.

raises: "If we regard the three personae of the Trinity as quite distinct persons or personalities in the full modern sense, we seem to imply that they are parts of God, and it is difficult to remedy this by going on to speak of their being united in the highest conceivable kind of unity.¹

If they are three distinct Persons, are they limited by each other, so that they are finite Persons?² Or if that is rejected as intolerable, and it is maintained that each has the divine attribute of infinity, is it not very difficult to think of three infinite Beings, of the same essence, coexisting

3 (see p. 78).

Quicumque Vult: "And the catholic Faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance.

"For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal."

1 Loofs, Wer War Jesus Christus, p. 212.

"Die göttliche Wirksamkeit nach aussen aber muss, wie die orthodoxe Tradition mit Recht behauptet, als ein schlechthin einheitlich-göttliche gedacht werden, wenn die Dreieinigkeitslehre nicht zu einer Drei-Götter-Lehre werden soll."

2 See the italics in fn. 1, p. 78, for Porrest's position.

with each other as distinct entities"¹ d) The subordination of the Son and, for the Incarnation, the complete exinanition of all His distinctly divine attributes, would seem to render the Son, per se, superfluous.² On earth He was capable of nothing which man could not theoretically accomplish and in heaven, as one can only suppose, His place could also be filled.³

This last point leads us to a further criticism. How does Forrest account for the various cosmic functions of the divine Logos while He is Incarnate,

1 D.M. Baillie, God Was In Christ, p. 141.

2 Orr, Progress of Dogma, p. 337. "The Self-obliteration of the Logos to the point of the surrender of His conscious life in the Godhead (which is their salient feature), is more than 'self-emptying' - it is practically self-extinction; while the Person that results is in no way distinguishable from ordinary man save in His undeveloped potencies. Thus, by a curious reversal of standpoint, Kenoticism works around to a species of Ebionitism."

3 Cooke, The Incarnation and Recent Criticism, pp. 206-207. "This theory is apparently in the interest of the real humanity of our Lord, but in fact it destroys the very integrity of the humanity it seeks to maintain by putting the emptied, the self-denuded, God-stripped Logos in the place of the soul in the human person. The reality of the humanity of the Redeemer cannot be sacrificed thus, nor, on the other hand, can we surrender the reality of his essential divinity, for in him, in the visible, historic, human Christ, says the apostle, 'dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' Also I.A. Dorner, Doctrine of the Person of Christ, Div. 2, Vol. III, p. 254.

completely subjected to the flesh. As a point of fact, Forrest does not account for them at all, but he does take account of the problem. "It is quite futile to seek to disparage the idea of the Son's self-limitation by asking what became of His cosmical functions during the incarnate period. ...It is no objection to it that it [the Kenotic Theory] does not answer all the questions that speculatively arise out of it."¹ However to admit a problem is not to solve it. One is certainly able to assert on empirical grounds that while Jesus, the Man, did walk upon the earth, the earth and heavens were sustained. It is impossible to escape such a conclusion.² Yet, this being so, the question reappears in slightly

1 Forrest, The Authority of Christ, pp. 95-96.

2 "My first criticism of the extreme Kenotic view is that it takes us outside the Gospel revelation and the Apostolic interpretation of it.

"The general tendency of the New Testament is towards the doctrine of the permanence of the universal life and cosmic functions of the Eternal Word. The Pauline doctrine of the Son is that He is the expression of God, the divine self-manifestation, from whom all things come, in whom all things are, and to whom all things must move. Without Him the universe would not be. To this the Epistle to the Hebrews also witnesses. And all down the ages the Church has received and maintained that the Word never for a moment ceased from His activity in upholding the creation. If, then, we are suddenly bidden to revise this doctrine, have we not the right to demand weighty and indisputable evidence based on Scripture? But of such evidence there is not the least trace." Frank Weston, The One Christ, pp. 128-129.

different circumstances, "Is Christ necessary?" Forrest in his earlier work recognizes this very problem, yet fails to come seriously to grips with it.

A third problem arises from the nature of the risen Christ: "If it be said that in that case [the Incarnation involving a *κένωσις* in order that the Son may be identified with man under the limits of time and space²] His humiliation must continue for ever, seeing that He has permanently taken the Manhood into God, the reply is obvious. Though we do not possess the data which would enable us to realize the nature of our Lord's risen and glorified Humanity, yet, ex hypothesi, it is such as does not

1 Forrest, The Christ of History and of Experience, p. 201: "But how can we reconcile the cessation of the Son's cosmic function during the period of His humiliation with what Christ reveals of Fatherhood and Sonship in the Godhead?...Can it be supposed that the Father could assume the Son's prerogative in creation more than in incarnation and redemption? Does not such an assumption, though only for a time, suggest that the Son is not really as essential to the Godhead as the Father is? If the latter can discharge temporarily, no matter for what high redemptive purposes, the cosmic function of the Former, and become the ground of the sonship which our moral life denotes, what satisfactory reply can be made to those who ask, Why not always look to the Father directly for the creation of the filial will in us?"

2 Ibid., pp. 190-191.

limit His divine power and knowledge. His earthly Humanity did so, as we see, "and, under any conceivable conditions of sensuous existence, must have limited them".¹ According to Forrest, the humiliation cannot continue after the ascension to the right hand of the Father, for then the Son has resumed His full glory, dominion, and power. Just as Christ's absolute humanity excludes by definition absolute divinity², so the converse is true: Christ's risen, infinite glory and resumption of status exclude by definition all finitude. This position, however, forces Forrest, as Thomasius and Fairbairn to forfeit the catholic doctrine of the permanence of Christ's humanity.³

1 Forrest, The Christ of History and of Experience, fn. 1, p. 191. This position is still maintained in The Authority of Christ, p. 345: "...in His exaltation...His human nature in no degree restricts the full activity of all the attributes of His Godhead."

2 See above, pp. 72-73.

3 See Fairbairn, pp. 44-45.

"We must still believe the Christ as Head of the Church to be the subject of His glorified humanity and therefore to some extent limited in His self-expression through manhood. For we may not suppose even glorified humanity to be equal with the divine nature of the Son. If, then, self-limitation is the characteristic of the heavenly state of the Incarnate, is it not at least probable that it is also the true characteristic of His earthly state?" Frank Weston, The One Christ, pp. 137-138.

A fourth problem concerns the nature of our knowledge of Christ's divinity. When Forrest puts to himself the question, 'What impels us to acclaim Jesus as the Incarnate Son?', the answer, ultimately, is, 'His human perfection, His complete dependence upon God.'¹ But is it not very hard to find support for such an argument? How is it possible for humanity, despite its perfection (even in an imperfect world) to argue for divinity? Again, by definition, they are opposites; the former is finite in all its manifestations, and the latter is infinite.² It is possible to say, 'Here is a man most favoured by God; what an intimate communion he has with God!', but that is not to declare the man divine. This argument 'by perfection' is also open to the 'Adoptionist' or 'Ebionite' type of error "by which Jesus was regarded as a man who achieved

1 See above, pp. 63-64.

2 "For albeit the properties of each nature do cleave only to that nature where of they are properties, and therefore Christ cannot naturallie be as God the same which he naturallie is as man, yet both natures may very well concurre unto one effect, and Christ in that respect be truly said to worke both as God and as man one and the selfesame thing." Richard Hooker, Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie, pp. 111-112.

such goodness that God exalted him to divinity or quasi-divinity."¹ In maintaining the integrity of Christ's humanity, and in maintaining that Christ's moral perfection was not superhuman but was a perfection proper to each time and circumstance, Forrest has this problem to face: Christ's sinlessness cannot be divinely guaranteed or else he would not be truly human, i.e. potuit peccare³; however, as long as this possibility remained could He truly be called the Son of God? Ex Hypothesi He was able to "fall". Would it not be empirically

1. D.M. Baillie, God Was In Christ, p. 129.

2. Forrest, The Authority of Christ, p. 12.

3. J.S. Whale, Christian Doctrine, p. 99: "We cannot conceive that Christ in the wilderness was truly pure unless we also conceive that he was able to sin, and that he even desired to sin, but did not."

K. Barth, Kirchliche Dogmatik Vol. I, p. 167: "Die heilsame Wahrheit darf aber nicht abgeschwächt und verdunkelt werden, dass die Natur, die Gott in Christus angenommen hat, identisch ist mit unserer Natur unter Voraussetzung des Sündenfalls. Wäre es anders, wie wäre Christus dann wirklich unseres-gleichen?"

Carl Ullmann, The Sinlessness of Jesus, p. 34: "The fact of sinlessness directly involves not only the potuit non peccare, and the non peccavit, - the possibility of remaining free from sin, and the actual freedom therefrom, - but also demands, at least as the postulate of the whole moral development, the potuit peccare. Without this the temptation of Christ would be devoid of reality, and His example would lose an essential element of its importance."

true, then, that being truly human, he could only be called the Son of God after He had completed successfully the Incarnation period? But this would be 'Adoptionism'.¹ The Kenotic Theory offers no real solution to this problem.

A fifth criticism concerns the basis or possibility of Incarnation, Forrest's concept of sonship. According to this Theory, the Logos is able to descend by emptying Himself and thus to become a man in the full and proper sense of the word. In order for this to be possible (and in order to avoid the awkward union of natures which Fairbairn employs), there must be an essential unity in all of creation which will permit such a proportioned diminution. That essential unity is sonship. Yet in order to make this concept of sonship effective, Forrest is really involved with a form of pantheism: "...all creation is in its final purpose but the self-projection of the divine,

1 Bruce, Humiliation, p. 181, says about the Absolute Metamorphic type of Kenotic Theory, "And in general it may be remarked in reference to Kenotic theories of the Gossian type, that they seemed doomed to oscillate between Apollinarism and Ebionitism. Either they make the Logos, qua human soul, not human enough or too human. Either they retain for the Logos a little of His divinity to carry Him safely through His curriculum of temptation, or, compelling Him to part with all but His metaphysical essence, they reduce Him strictly to Adam's level, and expose Him to Adam's risks."

or the realization without the Godhead of that sonship which eternally exists within."¹ Man is the analogue in creation of the uncreated Son.² Surely such an idea of self-projection on the part of God defeats the very need for ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ and Incarnation (not to mention the more orthodox and far-reaching problems of pantheism, e.g. sin, suffering, death, etc.). For if this sonship were as essential and fundamental as Forrest asserts, then it would be possible to be elevated to the Sonship, i.e. all men are potentially the Son of God.³ Just as it was possible for the Logos to become man with no more radical change than exinanition, so would it be possible, God willing, for man to become the Son of God by being filled. This being true, God's act of Incarnation and ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ would become melodramatic rather than sacrificial and necessary. Pantheism, even of this modified type, cannot be introduced as the basis for ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ without negating the very need for ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ and Incarnation

1 Forrest, The Christ of History and of Experience, p. 183.

2 Ibid.

3 A.J. Mason, The Faith of the Gospel, p. 132:

"This mystical union is, indeed, grounded upon the same fact as the Incarnation, namely that man is made in the Divine image, and therefore can enter into close relationship with God. But for all that, the hypostatic (that is, the personal) union is not merely a higher degree of the mystical. However fully developed the mystical union may be, it does not and cannot, break down the distinction of personality. It would be mere Pantheism to suppose it..."

Note on D.W. Simon's

Reconciliation By Incarnation

In broad outline the Kenotic Theory of D.W. Simon may be classified as a member of the "Absolute Metamorphic Type": it is the Logos, the Second Person of the Trinity alone who becomes the Incarnate, with such an act dependent upon a subordination view of the Trinity. But D.W. Simon does make one major addition to Kenotic thinking which is worthy of note. This addition is the employment of the metaphysical concept of a cosmic "kenosis" as the basis for the "kenosis" in the act of Incarnation. "Hitherto no effort has been made ... fully and logically to correlate the self-emptying of the Logos with the self-limitation of the Logos necessitated by the constitution given by God to the world."¹

Simon begins by asserting that God is limited by the independence of the material world which He has created: "The activity of the Logos in creating the world, be it not forgotten, is a vital, that is a continuous, activity; not however unvarying. As such it may be said to evolve. Vital activity which gives rise to a productive process cannot but, in some sense, evolve with the evolution of that which it produces. The evolution of the cosmos by the Logos may be regarded in fact as, in some sense, the reflex of an evolution in the Logos.

"Inasmuch now as the forces which generate the process

1. Simon, Reconciliation By Incarnation, p. 283.

of evolution, though, as was already laid down, in reality differentiations of energy put forth by God, are not directly wielded by God; being, on the contrary, endowed by God with a certain free independence of their own, obviously the process in God or in the Logos must, within specific limits, be determined by the process in the cosmos; the former must accommodate itself to the latter."¹ This independence of matter even affects the nature of God's knowledge. "However complete may be the knowledge God has of them [cosmic processes], ideally considered, that is, regarded as parts of the divine idea which is being realised; actually considered, that is, considered as successively realised in the cosmos, He must depend for his knowledge of them in part on observation."²

Such a definition of position is even more clearly given in relation to humanity: "Now the principle in question [God's self-accommodation] came into full operation, as far as the earth is concerned, when man appeared; for the blind or unconscious self-variability, which up to man, partially also in man himself, characterises the process of evolution, takes in man, at all events to some extent, the form of power freely and consciously to propose to himself ends of his own, and to choose the means by which the ends

1. Simon, Op. Cit., pp. 281-282.

2. Ibid., p. 285.

shall be attained. In presence of this consciously self-variable force, which is the supreme product of the divine creative power, the Creator's action needed and needs to accommodate itself to that of the creature to a degree which must sometimes seem to verge on dualism, or to involve a kind of dethronement of the Supreme Lord.¹ On the strength of this definition, Simon goes on to assert: "God cannot interfere with man by power or force, - no, not even to save a race from ruin and a world from disorder, - that is, He cannot interfere with that which specifically constitutes manhood, with man's spiritual nature, with his power of conscious choice."²

This view of the cosmos and man's position in it then permits Simon to introduce the "kenosis" involved in the Incarnation.³ Simon begins with the concept of Godhead to

1. Simon, Op. Cit., pp. 282-283.

2. Ibid., p. 284.

3. A.E. Garvie, Studies of Paul and His Gospel, p. 118.

".... to the Son of God, thus conceived, is ascribed a single temporal act of self-emptying. Expositors have made much of the aorist ἐκένωσεν; but it is doubtful wisdom to emphasise the niceties of Greek grammar in regard to a pre-temporal act. It seems to the writer much more intelligible that the Incarnation should be the consummation of a process of divine self-expression and self-communication in human history, and that this process should involve as the ground of its possibility an eternal act of self-emptying in the Godhead. The Son Himself is this Kenosis of the Deity, the self-emptying for self-expression and self-communication. For a concrete individuality and a temporal action we must substitute an eternal act in the Godhead, which we call Word or Son, which is the necessary condition of not only the Incarnation, but of the whole process of divine immanence in the universe of which the Incarnation is the consummation."

show what was involved in the process: "First, that in some real sense the Father in the Godhead is supra-ordinate to the Son and the Holy Spirit, in other words, that the factors which constitute the Godhead are not absolutely co-ordinate; secondly, that the Logos reduced Himself to unconsciousness relatively to both the intra-divine and extra-divine life of deity, and thus suspended that conscious fellowship between Himself and the Father and Spirit which was specifically characteristic of their life; thirdly, that such suspension of conscious fellowship involved a sacrifice, not only for Himself, but for the Father and the Spirit; fourthly, that by 'becoming flesh' the Logos surrendered the conscious, and therefore the free, the true, the real control (not the possession) of the divine energy by which He was essentially constituted; and fifthly, that the personal, and therefore conscious, free control over this energy must for the duration of the Kenosis have rested with the other factors of the Godhead."¹

This definition of the Incarnation, however, forces Simon to describe the nature of the Incarnate One in a manner hardly compatible with accepted orthodox patterns. "The person with whom we have to do is not actualiter Logos, the Second Person of the Trinity; for He had become flesh, He had emptied Himself of the divine form, that is, of the specific

L. Simon, Op. Cit., pp. 355-356.

divine consciousness. Nor was He man; for though, agreeable to the positions previously set forth, He was essentially akin to man, seeing that man is but a differentiation of the energy which He informs with a Logos-idea, He differed from man in nature, in powers, in sub-consciousness, and in intermittent consciousness, no less than in His moral and spiritual character.¹

This definition of the Incarnation likewise forces Simon to describe the inter-relations of the Trinity in a manner hardly compatible with accepted orthodox patterns. "Whether we choose to confess it or no, this [God's act of creation] is self-limitation, almost self-humiliation. It is consenting not to control, and not even to know, that which owes its existence, and the very possibility of self-control, to Him who gives the consent. [God, as it were, thus hides Himself from Himself; or, if that be scarcely accurate, He hides from Himself that to which His own energy proceeding through the Spirit, and His own reason acting through the Logos, has given the power which it wields."²

Simon provides the best and most concise summary for his own position: "The self-accommodation of the Logos just described passes at a certain point into self-limitation; or rather, self-limitation may be regarded as

1. Simon, Op. Cit., p. 327.

2. Ibid., pp. 287-288.

self-accommodation, either in new relations or at a higher
 potence." ¹ In criticism of this position, ² however, there
 is some question as to the value of Simon's contribution.
 Though there obviously is truth in the assertion that
 self-limitation as self-accommodation is involved in the
 Incarnation, ³ it is clearly not the whole truth. This
 theory denies by logical necessity the keystone of both
 Kenotic and orthodox theories, the true humanity of Jesus
 Christ.

1. Ibid., p. 283.

2. In so far as this is a Kenotic Theory of the Incarnation,
 it has already been criticised under the "Absolute
 Metamorphic Type;" in so far as this is a theory which
 involves God's relation to His creation, further specific
 criticism would be beyond the scope of this thesis.

3. A.E. Garvie. Studies In The Inner Life Of Jesus. p. 83

CHAPTER IV

CHARLES GORE

THE REAL BUT RELATIVE TYPE

Charles Gore

(Real but Relative Type)

Charles Gore was not only one of the earliest of the Kenotic theorists but also one of the most able and prominent.¹ It was his essay in Lux Mundi², which aroused widespread interest in Kenotic speculation. In the essay, Gore did not present a complete Kenotic Christology but rather made some provocative statements about our Lord's knowledge while on earth: "It is contrary to His [Christ's] whole method to reveal His Godhead by any anticipations of natural knowledge. The Incarnation was a self-emptying of God to reveal Himself under conditions of human nature and from the human point of view."³ This and similar statements occasioned immediate and strong protest from such men as H.P. Liddon, R.C. Oulton - On Gore's Essay in Lux Mundi, and W.F. Hobson - Some Aspects of the Incarnation; chiefly in reference to Lux Mundi - the last of whom wrote:

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- 1 Above, Ch.1, p. 10. J.S. Lawton, in his study of Gore's position, feels that Gore is the "most characteristic Anglo-Saxon exponent and champion... Gore's wide influence and leadership, and his great reputation as a scholar, largely account for the undeniable vogue which the kenotic theory enjoyed..." Conflict in Christology, p. 144.
 - 2 Essay VIII, Lux Mundi, 1889.
 - 3 Ibid., pp. 359.
 - 4 Hall, Kenotic Theory, p. 22.

"There is solid ground for fearing that Nestorianism is at the heels of all theories of our Lord's ignorance; they tend on their last analysis to the dividing of Christ."¹ However, this criticism, at least of Gore, was premature; for his later, more important works (The Bampton Lectures of 1891, "The Incarnation of the Son of God;" and Dissertations of Subjects Connected with the Incarnation, 1895.) show no such leaning to Nestorianism. In these two later works, Gore presents a clear and definite Kenotic Christology.²

In the "Preface" to his Bampton Lectures, Gore states: "The religion of the Incarnation is pre-eminently a religion of experience and fact; We know what God has revealed of Himself in the order of the world, in the conscience of man in general, by the inspired wisdom of His prophets, and in the person of Jesus Christ; and the best theology is that which is moulded, as simply and as closely as may be upon what has actually been disclosed."³ That which has been disclosed and which interests Gore immediately is Christ's restricted knowledge, and the note which Gore struck in Lux Mundi is developed into the questioning theme of his Bampton Lectures and Dissertations.

1 As quoted by J.S. Lawton, Conflict in Christology, p.118

2 It will be necessary to quote Gore at some length to do justice to the intricacy of his argument.

3 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. ix.

Evidence of Christ's "apparent limitations of knowledge"¹ is presented under four heads: 1) "There are attributed to our Lord constantly human experiences which seem inconsistent with practical omniscience."² 2) "Though our Lord knew so well, and told so plainly, the moral conditions of the great judgement to come, ...yet He expressly declared, as St. Matthew as well as St. Mark assures us, that of the day and hour of His second coming, no one knew except the Father, not even the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son; - and we cannot hold this declaration apart from the other indications that are given us of a limited human consciousness."³ 3) "A similar impression is left on our mind by the Gospel of St. John. Unmistakably is our Lord there before us as the eternal Son of the Father incarnate, but it also appears that the Son of the Father is living and teaching under human conditions."⁴ 4) Lastly, there is the argument from silence, coincident with these indications. Our Lord exhibits insight and foresight of prophetic quality.

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 147.

2 Ibid., e.g. St. Luke 8:30, 2:49; St. Mark 7:6, 11:13, 4:40, 7:18, 8:21, 14:37; St. John 11:34.

3 Ibid., p. 149, St. Matthew 24:36 [R.V.] St. Mark 13:32.

4 Ibid., p. 149, St. John 3:34; 8:28; 5:19,20; 17:11,8; 15:15.

He exhibits towards all facts of physical nature the receptiveness of a perfect sonship, so that for example, the laws of natural waste and growth are pointed out by Him with consummate accuracy in the parable of the sower. But He never enlarges our stock of natural knowledge, physical or historical out of the divine omniscience."¹ To cite these quotations is not to imply that Gore is interested exclusively in Christ's ignorance; such an assertion would be quite false. He is interested in establishing as fact the humanity of Christ and His divinity: "The evidences that our Lord really lived under human limitations are as plain as the evidences that in and under the properly human nature He who spoke, and worked, and suffered, was the Son of God, one with the Father."² Scripture, the primary source of appeal,³ demands that we recognise both facts. Gore then asks the questions: "how are

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 150. T.B. Strong, A Manual of Theology, p. 121, states: "The object of Christ was a moral revolution, and for this purpose a mere addition to our knowledge, critical or scientific, would be really irrelevant."

2 Ibid.

3 "...the whole historical position and justification of the specific form of Christianity called Anglicanism is bound up with its strenuous appeal to Scripture. In the appeal we must be sincere and thorough." Dissertations, p. 205.

the phenomena to be reconciled in one conception?
how can we imagine the consistency of the Godhead with
the manhood?"¹ His answer is - the Kenotic Theory.

The Kenotic Theory is important to Gore for it
not only answers his questions but it likewise employs
the empirical method of inquiry, which he favours.
"...so far as scientific theology has in and for this
age a special intellectual responsibility, it is to be
true to facts. Theology - Christian theology - may
be said to be as really inductive as physical science:
that is to say it draws conclusions from facts of
revelation."² With this as his acknowledged method,
Gore turns to the Scriptures to discover what facts
are evident, available, and revealed. "Unmistakeably
is our Lord there [Gospel of St. John] put before us as
the eternal Son of the Father incarnate, and unmistakeably
is the inner, essential unity of the Son and the Father
and their continual abiding one in the other there
insisted upon, but it also appears that the Son of the

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 150.

2 Gore, Dissertations, p. 205.

This same "intellectual principle" is set forth in
the introduction of the Bampton Lectures, though
perhaps more philosophically: "...the principle
namely that all right theory emerges out of
experience, and is the analysis of experience;
that the right method of philosophy is not a priori,
abstract, or external, but is based in each
department of enquiry upon a profound and
sympathetic study of the facts." p. viii.

Father is living and teaching under restrained human conditions."¹ But Gore finds this antinomy not just in the Gospel of St. John but in the Gospel narrative generally. The two views are suggested concurrently: "The facts which continually suggest that He is more than man, that He is in a unique sense Son of God, and those which suggest that He is living and speaking under conditions of human limitation, are indissolubly intermingled with one another. One impression is given by the Gospels, taken together, of a real entrance of the eternal Son of God into our manhood and into the limited conditions of consciousness necessary to a really human state. This view [Kenotic] can interpret and hold together all the phenomena, and this view does hold them all together and does enable us to read the Gospels without doing violence to any element in the many-sided but consistent picture which they present."²

But if such a polarity does exist, why does it exist? Why did God become man? "A divine motive caused the Incarnation", says Gore. "It was a deliberate act of God 'propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem'; it was a 'means devised' for our recovery and for our consummation, a means, therefore

1 Gore, Dissertations, pp. 84-85.

2 Ibid., pp. 87-88.

directed and adapted in the divine wisdom to serve its purpose. That purpose included on the one side a clearer revelation of God's mind and being to man in terms intelligible to him, and on the other hand the exhibition of the true ideal of human nature."¹

"...for love of us...For our sakes the Son of God abandoned His own divine prerogatives..."² But, as could be expected, God's love is not only the motive but also the possibility of the Incarnation.

"The Incarnation involves both the self-expression, and the self-limitation of God. God can express Himself in true manhood because manhood is truly and originally made in God's image; and on the other hand, God can limit Himself by the conditions of manhood, because the Godhead contains in itself eternally the prototype of human self-sacrifice and self-limitation"³,

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, pp. 155-156.

2 Gore, Dissertations, p. 90.

3 T.C. Edwards, The God-Man, pp. 129-130.

"But the kenosis consists of two successive steps. The first step was the laying aside the form of God and this act the Apostle dates back into the pre-incarnate state of the Logos. It was an infinite act of self-denial, than which a lesser would have been impossible to Him, as well as incapable of being revealed as an ethical example to men. Then, when He had divested Himself of His metaphysical omnipotence as Son of God, and was found in fashion as a man he humbled Himself - an expression properly applicable only to a man or the Logos as man - and He humbled Himself more than would have been possible to any mere man or angel, however perfect, and however much aided by the Spirit of God."

for God is love."¹

All the above data - Christ's human "ignorance", the witness of Scripture to His divinity and humanity, the motive and the possibility of Incarnation - lead Gore to the conclusion that only the Kenotic Theory, the self-limitation of the Son, can possibly hold the adequate answers: "In our own day it is still far too much the habit to treat the inquiry as a matter of one or two texts. It cannot be too much

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, pp. 161-162.

This quotation depends, in part, upon earlier statements about the doctrine of the Trinity. "In God then, we imagine, is a perfect and eternal life, of will and reason and love. But must not this be a life of relationships? Most surely love is only conceivable as a personal relationship of a lover and a loved. If God is eternal love, there must be an eternal object for his love. Again, the life of reason is a relationship of the subject which thinks to the object thought, and an eternally perfect mind postulates an eternal object for its contemplation. Once more, the life of will means the passage of will into effect; there is no satisfaction to will except in production; and eternally living and satisfied will postulates an eternally adequate product. Thus it is that our...trains of thought lead us to postulate over against God in His eternal being, also an eternal expression of that being, which shall be both an object to His thought and a satisfaction to His will and a repose to His love, and this is... the Logos, the eternal expression of God's being in fellowship with Himself." Bampton Lectures, pp. 134-135.

These statements (above) agree and make explicit his later statement in the Dissertations, which mentions "the eternal subordination and receptivity of the Son [to God the Father.]" Dissertations, p. 86.

emphasized that it is very far from being this. What is told us of our Lord's intellectual growth in childhood, of His relation to the Holy Spirit as man both in teaching and working miracles, of His progressive 'learning' from the Father, of His asking questions and expressing surprise, of His ignorance of the day and hour of the end, of His prayers, of His dismay and agony, of His feeling Himself 'forsaken' by the Father; all that St. Paul and St. John tell us to account for these facts, about His having 'come down' from heaven and left 'the glory' and after His resurrection returning whence He had come - of His 'emptying Himself', 'beggarizing Himself' to take the real characteristics of humanity, and of His being, in that humanity, subsequently exalted: all this (and there is nothing which disagrees with it) forces upon us, with a consistent pressure of evidence, the conclusion that a real self-emptying was involved in the Incarnation."¹ This "self-emptying" forms the basis for the Kenotic Theory.

To describe the act of *κένωσις*, Gore turns, naturally, to Scripture and specifically to St. Paul. Though he has asserted that the Kenotic Theory is not a matter of one or two texts,² such an assertion in no way negates the descriptive value which those particular

¹ Gore, Dissertations, p. 203.

² See above p. 102.

passages offer, prominent as they are. In
 Philippians 2:5-11, Paul "describes it [the *κένωσις*]
 as self-emptying. Christ Jesus pre-existed, he
 declares, in the form of God. The word 'form'
 transferred from physical shape to spiritual type,
 describes - as St. Paul uses it, alone or in
 composition, with uniform accuracy - the permanent
 characteristics of a thing. Jesus Christ then in
 His pre-existent state was living in the permanent
 characteristics of the life of God. In such a life
 it was His right to remain. It belonged to Him.
 But He regarded not His prerogatives as a man regards
 a prize he must clutch at. For love of us He abjured
 the prerogatives of equality with God. By an act of
 deliberate self-abnegation, He so emptied Himself as
 to assume the permanent characteristics of the human
 or servile life: He took the form of a servant.
 Not only so, but He was made in outward appearance
 like other men and was found in fashion as a man,
 that is, in the transitory quality of our mortality.
 The 'form', the 'likeness', the 'fashion' of manhood,
 He took them all. Thus, remaining in unchanged
 personality, He is exhibited as... 'laying aside the
 mode of divine existence' (*τὸ εἶναι ὡς θεῶν*)
 in order to assume the human.

"Again, St. Paul describes the Incarnation as a 'self-beggary'. [II Corinthians 8:9] The metaphor suggests a man of wealth who deliberately abandons the prerogatives of possession to enter upon the experience of poverty, not because he thinks it a better state, but in order to help others up through real fellowship with their experience to a life of weal. ...This is how St. Paul interprets our Lord's coming down from heaven, and it is manifest that it expresses something very much more than the mere addition of a manhood to his Godhead. In a certain aspect indeed the Incarnation is the folding round the Godhead of the veil of the humanity, to hide its glory, but it is much more than this. It is a ceasing to exercise, at least in a certain sphere, and so far as human thought can attain, some natural prerogatives of the divine existence; it is a coming to exist for love of us under conditions of being not natural to Godhead."¹

Gore is anxious to establish that this act of **ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ** is an act of great sacrifice not only for Christ but also for God. In fact, Gore specifies that such a 'double' sacrifice is necessary if the unity of the Godhead is to be maintained. The limitation of the Son is regarded "as not imposed from

¹ Gore, Dissertations, pp. 88-90.

without but an act of His own power - that divine power which declares itself 'most chiefly' in such self-renouncing 'pity' and love."¹ "Nor should it be left out of sight that, so far as the self-limitation of the Son even within a certain sphere of operation may be supposed to affect His essential consubstantiality with the Father, it is relative to that no less mysterious but also no less real act of self-denial on the part of the Father which the New Testament describes as His 'giving up' or 'giving' the Son. There is reciprocal self-sacrifice postulated alike in the Father and the Son."² It is this great sacrifice which forms the very moral fibre of the Incarnation. It is the supreme act of love which lays hold upon our very lives and "by which the Son of God took into Himself human nature to redeem it."³

The result of this act of denial, the *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ* of the eternal Logos, is true manhood. "The Son of God, without ceasing to be God, the Son of the Father, and without ceasing to be conscious of His divine relation as Son to the Father, yet, in assuming human nature, so truly entered into it as

1 Gore, Dissertations, pp. 208-209.

2 Ibid., pp. 209-210, listing St. John 3:16; I John 4:9; Romans 8:32.

3 Ibid., p. 224.

really to grow and live as Son of Man under properly human conditions, that is to say also under properly human limitations. Thus, if we are to express this in human language, we are forced to assert that within the sphere and period of His incarnate and mortal life, He did, and as it would appear did habitually - doubtless by the voluntary action of His own self-limiting and self-restraining love - cease from the exercise of those divine functions and powers, including the divine omniscience, which would have been incompatible with a truly human experience."¹ However, the *Κένωσις* does not result in a simplified form of metamorphosis - God becomes man - but rather results in a more complex dualism: "...withdrawing these [His power, majesty, and omniscience from operation within the sphere of the humanity] He yet Himself lived under human conditions. And this seems to postulate that the personal life of the Word should have been lived as it were from more than one centre² - that He who knows

¹ Gore, Dissertations, p. 94. "The humiliation of Christ is to be regarded therefore - nay, it is surely revealed in Scripture - as being a voluntary act of love; a state maintained by a continuous act of unwearied will." R.L. Ottley, The Doctrine of the Incarnation, p. 289.

² The last italics are mine.

and does all things in the Father and in the universe should (reverently be it said) have begun to live from a new centre when He assumed manhood, and under new and restricted conditions of power and knowledge."¹

To maintain that the Logos lived from two centers is not the result of a priori speculation but the logical position which emerges from an analytical, empirical study of the Scriptures. "But are we to posit this abandonment as absolute? Did the Son actually cease to mediate the procession of the Holy Ghost in the divine being and to uphold the worlds in being? Such a position, I repeat, could not be maintained unless the divine revelation positively and expressly forced it upon us. But it does not; on the contrary there is reason to believe that the apostolic writers contemplated the continuance of the divine and cosmic functions through the Incarnation. We must not then disturb or destroy the picture of the incarnate state which they give us in Gospels and Epistles by bringing the absolute divine state of the Son side by side with the picture of His humiliation: for this is exactly

¹ Gore, Dissertations, p. 215. (See also Gore, Belief In Christ, p. 226.) T.C. Edwards, The God-Man p. 108 agrees: "He fills two distinct spheres of action; the one as second Person in the Trinity, without beginning and without end, without humiliation and without subsequent exaltation; the other as Logos incarnate or God-man, which mode of existence He assumed at the incarnation, but will continue to have for ever; and it is the same divine Person that occupies both positions."

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what the apostolic writers do not do. We must hold to the reality of the humiliation, and, if we can see no further, we must be content to hold that, even in a way we cannot conceive, this state of limitation within the sphere of the humanity must have been compatible with the exercise in another sphere, by the same divine person, of the fulness of divine power."¹ Gore argues for this position not only from Scripture but also from the Fathers and tradition of the catholic Church: "Nor has the thought of the Church found the abandonment of the cosmic position even a conceivable hypothesis. Thus if we are asked the question - can the functions of the Son in the Godhead and in the universe have been suspended by the Incarnation? we cannot but answer, with the theologians

1 Gore, Dissertations, pp. 206-207. T.B. Strong, A Manual of Theology, p. 123.

"The Son of God, when He came to the earth, did nothing which could alter His essential nature. Being in the form of God before, He so remained. What He did do, was to lay down for the purposes of the Incarnation those attributes of glory which as equal to the Father, He had of right. He divested Himself of all external sign (if the expression may be allowed) of Godhead, and was found in fashion as a man. As Word of God we believe that He created and sustains the world: the world was sustained by the Word no less during the days of the humiliation."

of the Church from Irenaeus to Dr. Westcott,¹ that it is to us inconceivable. Nor can we dissociate the fulfilment of these functions from the exercise of omniscience."²

By this hypothesis Gore is able to defend the unity of Christ's person at the time of the Incarnation: "Throughout the Incarnation the person of the Son is unchanged."³ "Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate, was and is, at every moment and in every act, both God and man, personally God made man; He is as truly God at His birth or death as now in His glory, and as truly man now in His glory as formerly in His human birth and mortal life."⁴ Lest this view be considered rather ambiguous, Gore defines his position more sharply. "It [Gore's view of the person of Christ] is opposed, then, on the one side, to the view, which

1 Gore refers to this quotation from Irenaeus, con. Haer. v.18.3: Mundi enim factor vere Verbum Dei est: hic autem est Dominus noster qui in novissimis temporibus homo factus est, in hoc mundo existens et secundum invisibilitatem continet [-ens?] quae facta sunt omnia et in universa conditione infixus quoniam Verbum Dei gubernans et disponens omnia." Dissertations, p.99. refers to Westcott, Gospel of St. John, pp. 10-11, and to Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 426, where, in the latter, he states: "...this [creative and sustaining] work [of Christ] was in no way interrupted by the Incarnation." Dissertations, p. 200.

2 Gore, Dissertations, p. 93.

3 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 163.

4 Gore, Dissertations, p. 95.

I must call the a priori, dogmatical and unhistorical view that Christ's human mind was from the first moment of the Incarnation and continuously flooded with complete knowledge and with the glory of the beatific vision, so that He never could really grow in knowledge or be ignorant of anything, or be personally in any perplexity or doubt. It is opposed, on the other hand, to the a priori, humanitarian and also unhistorical view that the Son in becoming man ceased to be conscious of His own eternal sonship, and became, not merely a human but a fallible and peccable teacher. ...Both these views then appear to be equally contradicted by the evangelical narrative taken as it stands.¹ The view which is truly in accordance with the narrative must lie in between these two extremes; but even within the intermediate area we cannot, I think, be contented with a view which simply puts in juxtaposition, during our Lord's earthly life, the divine and human consciousnesses - which represents Him as acting and speaking now as God and now as man, and which attributes to him simultaneously omniscience as God and limitation of knowledge as man. ...It is not enough, for example, to recognise that our Lord was ignorant of the divine secret of the day and hour of the end, in respect of His human nature, unless we

¹ References to St. John 14:30-31, St. Matthew 24:35, St. John 16:30.

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recognize also that He was so truly living under human conditions as Himself to be ignorant. The Son Himself, as He reveals Himself to men in manhood, did not know."¹

By the Kenotic Theory, Gore, as other Kenoticists, desires to secure the doctrine of Christ's humanity, for it is through the perfection and leadership of His human life that we are brought to redemption and are given a standard of true humanity. "...He passed through all stages of a human development, willing with a human will, perceiving with human perceptions, feeling with human feelings, receiving, and depending upon, the illuminating and consecrating unction of the Holy Ghost."² Such a life meant real

1 Gore, Dissertations, pp. 95-97. Gore's language at this point is a bit confusing, and his statements here would seem to contradict such earlier remarks as, "...the humanity must have been compatible with the exercise in another sphere, by the same divine person, of the fulness of divine power"; (above, p.109) and, "Nor can we dissociate the fulfilment of these functions [by the Son] from the exercise of omniscience." (above, p. 110). In the passage presently being considered, it becomes obvious that all of Gore's references to the Son are to the Son within the sphere of the Incarnation. Thus there is, as well, and emphasis upon the unity of Christ's historic person; there is no dichotomy between human nature and divine nature. In the Incarnation the two natures are one and the same; that is the true meaning of the Incarnation. This unity should answer any accusation of Apollinarianism, such as J.S. Lawton makes in Conflict in Christology, p. 154. X

2 Gore, Bampton Lectures, pp. 162-163.

struggle and real effort on the part of Christ.

"For our sakes the Son of God abandoned His own divine prerogatives in God in order to win and merit, as man, by gradual and painful effort, a glory which, by right, might have been His all along, the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. And that glory in fact He received as the reward of His human obedience: because of the obedience of His mortal life God, says St. Paul, 'highly exalted Him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name - the divine name.'"¹ However, lest any one accuse him of describing Christ as a mere man, Gore points to three distinctions between our manhood and Christ's perfect manhood. 1) "In Him humanity is sinless."² "To say that He was sinless is to say that He was free. ...He did not sin, because none of His faculties were disordered, there was no loose or ungoverned movement in His nature, no movement save under the control of His will. He could not sin, because sin being what it is, rebellion against God, and He being what He was, the Father's Son in manhood, the human will which was His instrument of moral action, could not choose to sin. It is right...to say that Christ could have refused obedience if

1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 90. Philippians 2:9.

2 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 165.

He had willed; what was impossible was that He should will to sin."¹ 2) "In Jesus Christ humanity was perfect."² Man, originally, was created imperfect, i.e. he was adapted to develop freely along the lines of God's intention, as a self-conscious, free personality, yet instead of gaining perfection, he chose to rebel." "But in Christ, humanity is not only free from taint, but, in the moral and spiritual region, also at the goal of development. In Him first we see man completely in the image of God, realizing all that was in the divine idea for man."³ 3) "Jesus Christ is the catholic man."⁴ He is catholic in a unique sense because "He is exempt, not from the limitations which belong to manhood, but from the limitations which make our manhood narrow and isolated, merely local or national. Born a man, and a Jew, in a carpenter's family, He can be equally claimed by both sexes, by all classes, by all men of all nations. This is apparent, in part in the broad appeal which Jesus makes to man as man, in His teaching and in His institutions."⁵

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, pp. 166-167.

2 Ibid., p. 167.

3 Ibid., p. 168.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

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By the above three "points of distinction", Gore wishes "to make it apparent that the supernatural in Jesus Christ is not unnatural, and the miraculous not the 'reversal' or the 'suspension' of nature; rather, that Jesus Christ incarnate is the legitimate climax of natural development."¹ Such a view of Christ's manhood the Church has likewise guarded throughout her life.² But, this insistence upon the complete humanity of Christ does not prevent Gore from maintaining that Christ retained His self-consciousness as the Son: "The divine sonship is impressively asserted at the baptism of Jesus by John in the river Jordan. The pre-eminent dignity of the person of Jesus appears indeed nowhere in the Gospels more strikingly than in His relation to John the Baptist, as described in all the Gospels; and that this pre-eminent dignity carried with it throughout our Lord's ministerial life a consciousness of properly divine sonship, it is not possible for any one to doubt who accepts, even generally, the historical character of the synoptic Gospels and of St. John's. If His eternal pre-existence is

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 18.

2 Ibid., pp. 142-143.

plainly asserted by Him only in St. John, yet this is not separable from the essential sonship asserted in the synoptists.¹ But this consciousness of divine sonship is represented as co-existing with a really human development of life."²

Gore sums up his arguments for the Kenotic Theory by listing four considerations which point to the rationality of his conclusion. First of all, the Kenotic Theory observes the given, empirical data, no matter where such facts lead: "Nothing that is a fact can be irrational, but many things that are facts are beyond the power of human conceptions."³ Second, the fact that sympathy (love) is the keynote of the Incarnation supports the Kenotic Theory. "And surely here - in the region of love and sympathy - we have something analogous to a double life, and a double life which affects the intellect as much as any of our powers. To sympathize is to put oneself in another's place. Redemptive sympathy is the act of the greater and better putting himself at the point of view of the lower and the worse. He must not abandon his own higher standing-ground if he is to benefit the object of his compassion; but

1 Here Gore lists as examples: St. Mark 12:6, 37; 13:32; 14:62 and parallel passages. St. Matthew 11:27.

2 Gore, Dissertations, pp. 78-79. (See Bampton Lectures, pp. 145-146).

3 Ibid., p. 216.

remaining essentially what he was he must also find himself in the place of the lower; he must come to look at things as he [the lower] looks at them; he must learn things over again from his [the lower's] point of view....we have no better guide to the methods of God than the best human sympathy and love."¹ Third, the nature of knowledge argues for some form of Kenotic Theory. Our human knowledge is sense-conditioned, discursive, and unable to apprehend the innermost essence of things; but God's knowledge is intuitive (in an absolute sense), infinitely comprehensive, and infallibly penetrative of the innermost essence of things.²

"The more we ponder on this the more it seems to me we can realize how that 'birth' by which God became man, to enter into man's experience, for the sake of man's redemption, must have involved within the sphere of the humanity something which in human language can only be expressed as 'a sleep and a forgetting', so strangely exclusive (as it would seem) is the human mode of consciousness of the divine."³ And fourth, God's *κένωσις*, God's self-restrained power and presence, is seen throughout nature and man. This *κένωσις* of the Son is the

1 Gore, Dissertations, pp. 218-219.

2 Ibid., p. 221.

3 Ibid., pp. 221, 222.

supreme example. "...all this line of thought - all this way of conceiving of God's self-restraining power and wisdom - at least prepares our mind for that supreme act of respect and love for His creatures by which the Son of God took into Himself human nature to redeem it, and in taking it limited both His power and His knowledge so that He could verily live through all the stages of a perfectly human experience and restore our nature from within by a contact so gentle that it gave life to every faculty without paralyzing or destroying any."¹

This type of Kenotic Theory has the definite advantage of profiting by the mistakes of earlier Kenotic Theories and, at the same time, incorporating their positive contributions to Christology. Gore, as earlier Kenoticists, finds love at the root of the Incarnation. Love is the motive and love is the possibility of the exinanition.² But the reality of love entails the reality of sacrifice, not only of the Father who gives but also of the Son who goes.³ To secure the real humanity of Jesus, which the Scriptures warrant, some supreme act of humility by Him who 'for our sakes became

1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 224.

2 Above, p. 101.

3 Above, pp. 105-106.

poor' is necessary.¹ To ascertain the nature of this humiliation Gore maintains the necessity of viewing all evidence, and Scripture in particular. In such a way he hopes to provide an empirical and scientific basis for his Theory.² This much Gore has in common with Fairbairn and the other early Kenoticists, but there are advantages and emphases which are unique in this system.

First, by asserting that the Incarnation was a sphere and period within the eternal life of the Logos,³ Gore is able to avoid the accusation that he has neglected to take into account the doctrine of the Impassibility of God.⁴ "Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate, was and is, at every moment and in every act, both God and man, personally God made man."⁵ It is true that God sacrifices His Son, but this is not a "change" or "metamorphosis"⁶ of God but the very expression of His love - the essential nature of God. The Incarnation, for Gore, is God revealing Himself as man, yet remaining what He was and is, God.

1 Above p.107.

2 Above, p.108.

3 Gore, Dissertations, p. 94.

4 An accusation made against Fairbairn, pp. 40-41.

5 Gore, Op.Cit., p. 95.

6 An accusation made against D.W. Forrest, pp. 74-75.

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Second, by speaking of Christ's Incarnation as a "sphere" and "period" of His eternal life as Logos, Gore is able to avoid the problem of Cosmic Functions for which Fairbairn is unable to account.¹ "Can the functions of the Son in the Godhead and in the universe have been suspended by the Incarnation? We cannot but answer...that it is to us inconceivable."² The eternal Word of God who expresses Himself within the sphere of humanity does not control the universe, but the eternal Word of God who expresses Himself within the fulness of the Godhead, does.

Third, and the corollary of the second, by defending the dual life of the Logos, Gore is able to escape the loss of continuity in Christ's love and experience, which marked Fairbairn's theory.³ Though Christ at one time is a babe in His mother's arms, He is so by His own consent. "This new form of the theory is not open to the charges of making the Logos, by one act of self-depotentiation, incapable of displaying His gracious love in connection with a large part of His human experience. While the Logos, as man, passes through the unconscious life of childhood, He is conscious of this stage of His incarnate being, and

1 Ch. II, pp. 37-38.

2 Gore, Dissertations, p. 93.

3 Ch. II, pp. 32-33.

shows His love by consenting to pass through it."¹

Thus His sympathy and love can be mediated to all of mankind alike on the basis of His common experience with mankind. In this case His humanity is not a hindrance but a help.

Fourth, by arguing consistently that the purpose of the Incarnation is the redemption of man and that the nature of the Incarnation is sympathy and love, Gore is able to preserve the dignity and freedom of the individual man. Christ took our human nature into Himself so that He might "restore our nature from within by a contact so gentle that it gave life to every faculty without paralyzing or destroying any."² In such an experience of divine presence, God is not saying "You are mine", but rather, "I am with thee." Surely this is one valid aspect of an encounter with God; it is the experience of being won, not forfeited,

1 Bruce, Humiliation of Christ, p. 187. Bruce is here defending the Danish Kenoticist Martensen whose theory is perhaps the original "Real but Relative Type." Gore does not give Martensen credit for any particular points but does say in one place (Dissertations, p. 215): "The conception at which we have arrived from the examination of the New Testament...seems to involve us in thinking of the Incarnation somewhat after the manner of Bishop Martensen."

2 Gore, Dissertations, p. 224.

to God. Our individual freedom (be it only to rebel) is not jeopardized.

Fifth, Gore is able to account in an ingenious way for the sinlessness of Christ by the perfection of His manhood: "To say that He was sinless is to say that He was free. ...He did not sin, because none of His faculties were disordered, there was no loose or ungoverned movement in His nature, no movement save under the control of His will."¹ The perfect will by nature would make the perfect choice in any given situation. In such a way, Gore is able to reassert the humanity of Christ at a critical point and does not lose the moral power of Christ as paradigm. This argument is followed by an even more subtle one: "He could not sin, because sin being what it is, rebellion against God, and He being what He was, the Father's Son in manhood, the human will which was His instrument of moral action, could not choose to sin. It is right...to say that Christ could have refused obedience if He had willed; what was impossible was that He should will to sin."² Such an argument completely avoids the metaphysical problems involved in defending potuit peccare, potuit non peccare, or non potuit peccare; for the question of Christ's

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 166.

2 Ibid., pp. 166-167.

sinlessness has become an ethical question! Christ can sin, but He may not sin - that is the point. Christ is the divine Word as man; therefore He is humanly perfect, and the consistency of His perfect, human character makes sin metaphysically possible but ethically impossible. "What was impossible was that He should will to sin." In this position Gore can maintain the impossibility of sin for Christ, which avoids the charge of Adoptionism, and yet can assert Christ's true humanity which avoids the charge of Apollinarianism.

Sixth, Gore has maintained the catholicity of Christ's character without yielding His claim to human nature. "Jesus Christ is the catholic man. ... [He] is exempt, not from the limitations which belong to manhood, but from the limitations which make our manhood narrow and isolated... Born a man, and a Jew, in a carpenter's family, He can be equally claimed by both sexes, by all classes, by all men of all nations. This is apparent, in part, in the broad appeal which Jesus makes to man as man..."¹ This observation permits Gore to avoid the ubiquitous pitfalls

1 Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 168.

encountered by calling Christ Man but not a man.¹

Such a catholicity is recognition of the fact that, at least as far as human beings are concerned, true individuality involves universality. For example, it is not because Shakespear's "Hamlet" is some shadowy, vague character that he has meaning all over the world, but it is that "Hamlet" is so perfectly and individually drawn that everyone everywhere recognizes the "Hamlet" in himself. This is true whether he be Russian, German, Indian, or British. In Christ that catholicity, that identity, becomes complete, for He is as we should be.

Before noting the more general, objective criticisms of Gore's Kenotic Theory, there are some inconsistencies and criticisms within the theory itself which should not be overlooked. First, there is a question about the necessity of introducing a

1 The danger, for example, of describing Christ as a complex or collection of abstract qualities, e.g. the embodiment of truth, justice, love, mercy, strength, wisdom, etc., rather than as a man in whom such terms are part of the total expression of His particular personality. T.O. Edwards, however, defends such a position: "He was tempted to sin, but withstood the temptation. He had true and complete humanity, and human nature, as such and alone, is capable of sin. Shall we, therefore, admit that Jesus was capable of sin? But He was Son of God. Christ was Man, but not a human person, He was a Divine Person, and therefore absolutely and eternally incapable of sin; for sin is the act and property of a person, not of a mere nature apart from the persons who have that nature. The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 72.

subordination doctrine of the Trinity.¹ In those types of Kenotic Theory represented by Fairbairn and Forrest, one can understand the necessity of holding such a doctrine of subordination; otherwise, the Godhead is left vacant during the period of the Son's exinanition. However, this is not the case in the present theory. Gore does not believe that the Son in becoming a man ceases to be active as God, the cosmic Ruler. The Logos, says Gore, is, at the period of the Incarnation, living from two centres.² By maintaining this position, subordination of God the Son to God the Father is no longer necessary.³ And if it be (as it appears to be)⁴ true that the doctrine of Son's subordination is introduced to support the doctrine

1 Above, p. 102 fn. 1.

2 Above, p. 107.

3 T.C. Edwards resolves the problem by a definition of terms: "We infer that subordination, rightly understood, contains a great truth, and Origen's happy phrase, 'eternal generation', implies subordination, without sacrificing equality. For a son is by the fact of sonship subordinate; but whatever is eternal and within the Godhead is equal. The subordination of the Son is taught by our Lord Himself in John 5:19...and in John 14:28..., which the Greek expositors rightly consider to include the Son's subordination to the Father within the sphere of the Trinity.... But the disciples were not in danger of thinking that the human nature of Christ was equal with God. Equality and subordination may be quite consistent with each other." The God-Man, pp. 8-10.

4 Above, p. 102 fn. 1.

of God's Immutability and Impassibility, i.e. that the "Godhead contains in itself eternally the prototype of human self-sacrifice and self-limitation..."¹ and thus expresses no fundamental change, then it would appear that Gore is indulging in that a priori reasoning which he himself so deprecates. By his own argumentation, he need only have cited God's love as the reason and possibility of κένωσις, for he states that what love can demand, love can accomplish.² To support the κένωσις by the doctrine of subordination is neither necessary nor empirical³ and serves only to weaken the theory.⁴

A second criticism arising within the Theory concerns Christ's self-consciousness as divine Logos. Gore states: "If His eternal pre-existence is plainly

1 Above, p. 101.

2 Gore, Dissertations, p. 220.

3 For criticism of the doctrine of subordination of the Son, see Forrest in loc.

4 "...Any change in the mode of His existence, consequent upon His incarnation, will not affect the mode of existence of the other two Persons in the Trinity. The Father did not become incarnate. The perichoresis within the Trinity does not touch the Logos so far as He is incarnate; and, on the other hand, the communicatio idiomatum will become the perichoresis of the Logos incarnate, as Damascene says, but will not touch the other Persons of the Trinity." T.C. Edwards, The God-Man, p. 112.

asserted by Him only in St. John, yet this is not separable from the essential sonship asserted in the synoptists. But this consciousness of divine sonship is represented as co-existing with a really human development of life."¹ But is such co-existence really possible? Earlier Gore had stated: "...this state of limitation within the sphere of the humanity must have been compatible with the exercise in another sphere, by the same divine person,² of the fulness of divine power."³ Thus to be truly self-conscious would likewise be to be conscious of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. This presents grave problems for any assertion of Christ's humanity.⁴

A third criticism involves Gore's description of Christ's growth and development. Christ "abandoned His own divine prerogatives in God in order to win and merit, as man, by gradual and painful effort, a glory which, by right, might have been His all along, the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. And that glory in fact He

1 Above, p. 115.

2 My italics.

3 Gore, Dissertations, p. 207.

4 See Forrest in loc.

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received as the reward of His human obedience..."¹
Is this possible, particularly in light of the dual centers of life from which the Logos lives? At best such a "reward" would be redundant, for it would mean that Christ would "win" back not only what was His but what still is His in the greater sphere of activity. Again, if we are to take such words as "win", "merit", and "reward" seriously, this position would ultimately result in some form of Adoptionism which would hardly be compatible with the rest of Gore's position.

A fourth criticism results from Gore's inconsistency of method. Although he is committed to an empirical, scientific approach to doctrine,² he frequently makes assertions of a speculative nature which have no empirical basis. J.S. Lawton feels such speculation is evident in Gore's treatment of μορφή Θεοῦ in the Epistle to the Philippians 2:5-11: "...it would seem on the whole as though his first definition of the term μορφή Θεοῦ is seriously intended, i.e. the permanent characteristics of God - in other words, God's attributes. ...There may exist reasonable doubt whether μορφή Θεοῦ does in fact refer to the sum of the properties of God....There is far more involved

1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 90.

2 Above, p. 99.

in his [Gore's] language than the abnegation of the appearance or outward glory of Godhead."¹ Likewise, Gore's doctrine of the Trinity, which results in the subordination of the Son,² is highly speculative. Knowledge of the inner relationships of the Trinity hardly offers itself for empirical study. Again, it is surely beyond one's experiential knowledge to assert, as Gore does, that one aspect of God's nature, His love, is so dominant as to control completely all other aspects which ex hypothesi can be placed in a hierarchy.³ And, finally, there is even a certain obscurity which surrounds Gore's description of the act of *κένωσις*, as the number and variety of descriptive terms show: "self-abnegation" (89)⁴, "self-beggary" (89), "self-restraining" (94), "self-impooverishment" (204), "self-emptying" (88), "self-limitation" (93), "self-humiliation" (93), "self-renouncing" (209), "self-accommodation" (209), and such terms as "abjured" (89), "ceasing" (90), "abandon" (90), "forgetting" (219). This is hardly scientific accuracy.

1 J.S. Lawton, *Op. Cit.*, p. 146

2 Above, p. 102 fn. 1.

3 Gore, Dissertations, p. 220.

4 All numbers are page references in Dissertations.

A fifth criticism is one which Gore really makes of himself. In his Dissertations he has gone to great lengths to secure support among such early Church "Fathers" as Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, the Cappadocian Fathers, Irenaeus, Augustine, Hilary of Poitiers, and Cyril of Alexandria.¹ From these "Fathers" he had hoped to find views concerning the humanity of Christ, which would support his Kenotic Theory. But his findings were few;² this he attributes more to the fault of the times than to the lack of perspicacity of the "Fathers": "The defectiveness of the theology of fathers and schoolmen

1 For Patristic views of the kenosis see the following: Origen (Contr. Celsus, iv.5; De Prin. i.4); St. Hilary (De Trin., iii.16; Quod Unus sit Christus); St. Leo (Epist. xxviii.3; Serm. xxi); Tertullian (De Carne Chr., c.iii; Adv. Praxeas, 27); St. Athanasius (c. Apollin., ii.7; Orat. c. Arian., III., 31); St. Gregory Nazianzen (Orat., xxix. 19; xxxviii. 2); St. Cyril of Alexandria (3d. Ep. ad Nest., c.3.); Theodoret (Epist. 130); St. Ignatius (Ephes. c. vii; Polyc. iii); Melito (Fragn. 13, 14); St. Irenaeus (iii. 16.6.). For further commentary and study, see Powell, The Principle of the Incarnation, pp. 272-299; and E.J. Hall, The Kenotic Theory.

2 The paucity of findings is likewise supported by J.H. Creed, The Divinity of Jesus Christ, p. 77; H.M. Relton, A Study in Christology, p. 53; E. Loofs, Wer War Jesus Christus, p. 213.

on the subject which we have had under review [and the humanity of Christ] was due to causes which belonged to their periods."¹ Gore then lists three causes: poor (limited) exegesis, a priori philosophical categories, and the stress of heresies.² Gore concludes by saying "In the special subject of this

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- 1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 213. T. C. Edwards agrees with this analysis. "The theory was not favoured in the early Church, owing to the influence of Athanasius, and to the extreme and confessedly heretical form in which it was thought to be presented by Apollinarius." The God-Man, p. 127. J.S. Lawton, however, criticizes Gore at this point for implying that if modern scholarship had been available to the Fathers, the Fathers would have arrived at a Kenotic position, too. "...to seek support for any new theory in isolated utterances of these writers [the Fathers] on the plea that such remarks - if carried to their logical conclusion by those writers - would have led inevitably to the theory thus seeking support, can scarcely be entertained as a legitimate occupation for the expositor of the Christian Faith." Lawton, pp. 155-156.
- 2 Ibid., pp. 213-214. Gore does receive some support from Quick, particularly on the second and third "causes" Gore mentions: "We have already seen why patristic theologians were prevented from working out the suggestions of a kenotic Christology to be found in St. Paul's Epistles. They were committed from the start to a Hellenic conception of the divine nature. Just for that reason, if a patristic theologian had seriously put forward a kenotic theory, he would almost certainly have laid himself open to the charges of making the deity passible, or of teaching that it was subject to variation (τρέπτός), or that it was changed by becoming incarnate (conversio divinitatis in carne)."
Quick, Doctrines of the Creed, p. 135.

inquiry we do not...see them [the Fathers] at their best."¹ There is a modification of this position in regard to the great ecumenical councils of the Church. Though he labels them as inadequate,² he still wishes to remain within the bounds which they define. "...the [Kenotic] view expressed above involves no limitation of the divine activity of the Word absolutely in Himself or in the world, but only within a certain area. I can, therefore, affirm without any hesitation with the fourth Council that the 'one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is both perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man'..."³ Gore's freedom to make such an assertion rests in his interpretation of the first Council of Nicaea: "...the fathers of the Council had only moral alterability in view in their ecclesiastical decision, as it was only moral alterability which the Arians asserted of Christ, and any idea of moral alterability has in this discussion been expressly repudiated."⁴ But further, even in regard to metaphysical alteration, it must be remembered that in the view here presented the limitation of which the incarnate Son is the subject

1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 214.

2 Ibid., p. 162.

3 Ibid., p. 210.

4 The validity of this point is debated in an article entitled "Canon Gore on the Incarnation and the Eucharist", Church Quarterly Review, No. LXXXii, Jan. 1896, pp. 318-319.

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is regarded (1) as not affecting His essential being or operation in the universe, (2) as not imposed from without but an act of His own power - that divine power which declares itself 'most chiefly' in such self-renouncing 'pity' and love. All that is asked then is that the Son should be regarded as exhibiting a divine capacity for self-accommodation within a certain sphere in carrying out His unchanging redemptive purpose."¹ However, after making this point which somewhat begs the whole kenotic question, Gore adds this: "With such a view the fathers of Nicaea were not in any way concerned."² Such a sentence carries its own verdict.

While still working within the framework of Gore's theory, one point should be made here in his defence. J.S. Lawton in his summary of Gore's position³ accuses Gore of making the same logical contradiction as Thomasius and Fairbairn: that of omnipotence willing itself impotent.⁴ "Assuming that the kenosis is a voluntary act, it is in the first place impossible for omnipotence to will itself

1 Gore, Dissertations, pp. 208-209.

2 Ibid., p. 209.

3 J.S. Lawton, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 143-156.

4 Fairbairn, *Ch.II*, p. 32.

to be limited. If the kenosis be looked upon as a continuous restraint, as Gore appears to do, the contradiction is even worse, for it would require an omnipotent will constantly in operation to restrain omnipotence. Similarly omniscience cannot will itself to unknow or forget; and assuming that such an act of kenosis were possible, then it would require an omnipotent will and an omniscient mind to perform the transformation back again, which, ex hypothesi, the kenoted Christ did not possess."¹

However, Bruce, in defending Martensen at this point ably handles this criticism: "The initial difficulty pointed out in connection with the Thomasian scheme does not meet us here, where the kenosis while real is only relative; inasmuch as, on this hypothesis, the Incarnation does not signify the assumption of human nature by an already absolutely depotentiated Logos, or by an act of power on the part of the Logos, which is at the same time an act of self-depotentiation; but consists in a voluntary act, by which the Logos becomes a human life centre, without His power being exhausted in the act. The passivity of the depotentiated Logos, and helpless subjection to the flesh, in the incarnate state also disappear; for to

¹ Lawton, Op. Cit., p. 149.

whatever extent the laws of physical nature have power over the Logos, in that state they have it by His own consent."¹

The above criticisms made within the context of Gore's theory are really not devastating to his argument; more correctly they should be conceived as problems for which a solution may be sought. Nevertheless, when this Kenotic Theory is viewed as a Christology, the center of Christian Dogmatics, the criticisms become more serious. First of all, attention should be focused on Gore's attempt to secure a rational acceptance for his particular Kenotic Theory. He offers for examination four points designed, if not to prove his hypothesis, at least to support it specifically. But, there is some doubt as to whether Gore has, in fact, accomplished his purpose. 1) He suggests that the Kenotic Theory receives rational support because of its empirical, experiential approach.² Gore admits difficulty in conceiving the divine *κένωσις*³ but goes on to say, "Nothing that is a fact can be irrational, but many things that are facts are beyond the power of human conception."⁴ It would

1 Bruce, *Op. Cit.*, p. 187.

2 Above, p. 116.

3 Gore, Dissertations, p. 215.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 216.

be hard to disagree with this; surely, this is just where the traditional orthodox position does end - in the mystery of the God-man.¹ But there is the point where criticism must start; the Kenotic Theory does not end with the mystery of the God-man but proceeds to explain how the relationship came into being and to describe the nature of the relationship itself. Such discourse can be accepted as legitimate speculation or even as a possible hypothesis incapable of further proof, but it is not empirical or factual. It is because of this type of speculation that the Kenotic Theory has been called mythological.² The facts plus the 'eyes of faith' do demand a paradoxical situation, but they do not demand a *κένωσις*. 2) Gore maintains that because sympathy (love) "is the

1 J. Moorhouse, The Teaching of Christ, p. 32.
 "still, however, it may be asked, if we admit the true and limited humanity of our Lord, how are we to co-ordinate this fact with that other equally affirmed by the orthodox faith, that He was God, endowed with Divine omniscience? How can the fallible dwell with the infallible, ignorance with omniscience, in the same personality? I answer at once for myself, that the manner of this wondrous hypostatic union is a mystery too great for me. I will not pretend to understand what transcends my finite capacity, but neither will I deny the essential elements of this mysterious truth, nor any of them, because I cannot understand the manner of their co-ordination."

2 Fairbairn, Ch. II, 45.

keynote of the Incarnation"¹, we have an analogy which supports the dual position of the Logos in this Kenotic Theory. "To sympathize is to put oneself in another's place. Redemptive sympathy is the act of the greater and the better putting himself at the point of view of the lower and the worse. He must not abandon his own higher standing ground if he is to benefit the object of his compassion."² Again, to an extent, we must agree with Gore. There is an element of sympathy, empathy which is manifest in the Incarnation; it was the Son, "who for us men and for our salvation came down..."³ Yet, does it not dwarf the greatness of God's love to limit such an act to sympathy? Surely love is greater than sympathy; sympathy can be only part of God's self-expression in the Incarnation. Who can, for example, exclude judgement?⁴ But for the sake of the analogy, suppose that sympathy were sufficient for atonement. Would that necessarily support ?
Ultimately it would not. On the surface, the analogy to which Gore refers is evident. As

1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 218.

2 Ibid., p. 218.

3 Nicene Creed.

4 'This is the judgement, that the light is come into the world.' (St. John 3:19).

God-man, Christ is in a position of mutual susceptibility with His fellow man and, at the same time, is "outside" the situation ready to help. But sympathy, per se, does not in any way suggest **ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ** (indeed it cannot even suggest Incarnation). It is only able - as an analogy - to support an existing God-man hypothesis such as orthodox Christianity expresses. For who can say that the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God could not be completely sympathetic; or who can say that Christ as man could not be sympathetic without referring to the Godhead? Furthermore, sympathy not only implies a relationship but also implies a response which results from that relationship. Thus would it not be more correct to say that God realized man's rebellion and despair, was compassionate - i.e. had sympathy - and, as a response sent His only-begotten Son? Would not sympathy, then, be better considered as the analogy for the motive rather than the nature of the Incarnation? This criticism finds incidental support in another Kenoticist, P.T. Forsyth, who says, "To this end [the redemption of man] the Son of God sympathetically renounces the glory of his Heavenly state."¹ This position would seem to

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 313. *My italics.*

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suggest, as indicated above, that sympathy is prior to the act of Incarnation and is not an adequate description of the kenotic state. 3) Gore believes that the nature of knowledge indicates some form of *Κένωσις*, a "sleep of forgetting."¹ God's knowledge is intuitive, infinitely comprehensive, and infallibly penetrative of the essence of things. Our knowledge is sense-conditioned, discursive, and unable to apprehend the essence of things. But are these statements not presumptuous to a great degree? Is not our own understanding of human epistemology so uncertain that it makes our projection (were that even logically possible) of God's 'epistemology' quite worthless? Who can measure the 'depth' or degree of intuition which ultimately stands behind our 'Laws of Thought'? Who has yet solved, to the honest satisfaction of all inquiring minds, the true nature of perception and the correlation of sense data? How is it possible for us to move from this (which is what we must do if we are to be in any way empirical and not completely a priori) to a description of God's knowledge? Should one not agree with the psalmist and admit that 'such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot

1 Gore, Dissertations, pp. 221-222.

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attain unto it?¹ Yet, suppose such knowledge were available, it would still not necessitate a *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ* in the sense in which Gore uses the term - "a sleep of forgetting" - which implies abandonment of part of God's eternal nature.²

4) Lastly, Gore supports the rationality of his position by citing God's relation to man and nature as a whole. "God realizes His will in nature by an infinite variety of distinctive forms of life. And He loves to see each form of life realize itself in its own way. He respects the nature of each thing."³ Thus *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ* is not a new act in Christ but a description of God's relation to all the world.

1 Psalm 139:6.

2 If it be said that such an act of does not imply abandonment of God's eternal nature but addition to the Godhead of human nature, then could it possibly be called ? "...if God the Son remains during the period of the Incarnation in the full and complete exercise of his functions 'in the Father' and in the universe, and is only limited within the sphere of the Incarnation, a sphere which for him did not previously exist, then wherein lies the self-emptying?" Lawton, Conflict in Christology, p. 154.

3 Gore, Dissertations, p. 222.

This Self-limitation of God is most clearly evident in man's "real, though limited, freedom."¹ If man and nature are to be free to express their individuality, God must limit Himself²; yet, this is an entirely different use of the term *Κένωσις* than that which Gore has been using up to now.³ To say that God limits Himself in order to protect the individuality of that which He has created ex nihilo and continues to sustain, is not to say that He abandons that which is eternally His.⁴

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- 1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 223. The validity of this argument of Gore's receives support, in a negative way, from the existentialist movement in philosophy. In an effort to establish absolute freedom for the individual, the existentialist (e.g. M. Heidegger) must deny the existence of God; for if there is a God, then He, because of His infinite Nature, stands over and against the individual, limiting his true freedom.
- 2 R.L. Ottley express just such an opinion in the Doctrines of the Incarnation, Vol. II, p. 285: "The Incarnation is only one stage in a process which had already begun in creation. In creation God voluntarily limited Himself. He showed Himself willing to forego part of His absolute prerogative in admitting other beings to a relative independence as over against Himself.
- 3 D.M. Baillie makes this point in connection with the Russian Orthodox theologians Bulgakov and Gorodetzky: "Russian Orthodox thought has made considerable use of the idea [*Κένωσις*] ...as indicating something which is involved in Creation itself, and even in the Trinity. But that is something quite different from the Kenotic Theory as a Christology..." God Was In Christ, p. 98.

4 (Over page)

These two types of *Kenosis* vary in kind as well as degree.

The second general criticism of Gore's position, and most important, concerns the nature of the self-limited Logos - the God-man. All of the above criticisms rest to some extent upon what Gore really means when he speaks of the Logos as living from two life centres. He obviously means something other than the orthodox description of the two natures in one Person, or he would not have gone to such lengths to present his position. Nor would he have rejected the definition of Chalcedon as inadequate.¹ His position, which he himself seems to realize, is a difficult one to formalize. In speaking of the Kenotic Theory of Martensen, his

4 (contd. from p.141). "In His dealings with a universe which He called into existence, and which He could annihilate at pleasure, God is only 'self-limited'; He remains 'transcendent', while He is 'immanent'. He surrendered no power over created wills when, for the purposes of His moral administration, He refrained from coercing the freedom which was His pure gift. There is all the difference in the world between resigning a prerogative and forbearing in certain cases to exercise it." Wm. Bright, Waymarks in Church History, pp. 390, 391.

1 "The definition of Chalcedon affirmed the juxtaposition of the divine and human natures in Christ each with its separate and distinct operation, but contributed nothing positive towards the solution of the question: how is this duality of natures and operations related to the unity of the person?" (Dissertations, p. 162)

Danish counterpart, Gore states, "To this view - perhaps I should say to this attempt to adumbrate a line of thought - there is, I think, no objection except the difficulty of conceiving it."¹ Such a statement can not be calculated to increase one's confidence in the Theory, and, in fact, does arouse suspicions.² What, then, is Gore's position and how does it differ from that of orthodoxy. "To him [Gore], the older doctrine of a substantial soul, or an ego, an individuating principle, or central point of reference, possessing two quite distinct natures was meaningless. This explains

1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 193. R.L. Ottley agrees: "There is, we frankly admit, real difficulty in forming a conception of a single personality occupying, as it were, a double sphere of consciousness; at once Divine and human, omniscient and nescient." Doctrine of the Incarnation, Vol. II, p. 291.

2 "If...with Gore we shrink from the difficulties of this position and prefer to think that the Logos functions simultaneously as the omnipotent and omniscient sustainer of the universe and as the depotentiated Logos in Jesus Christ, we introduce a perilous dualism within the Second Person of the Trinity and to that extent we weaken our seeming gain in maintaining the Logos to be the centre of Our Lord's consciousness." J.M. Creed, The Divinity of Jesus Christ, p. 77.

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his failure to accept Chalcedonian Christology as it stood.¹ Hence to him, this human sphere in which the Logos for a time subsists, was not simply a nature assumed by him and operated by him; for it was itself a self-conscious existence, and such consciousness was to Dr. Gore and his contemporaries not simply a part or faculty of abstract human nature, it was itself almost the essence of personality. Hence the possession of these two modes of existence by the Logos, practically amounts to his having lived his life from two life centres. This is how Dr. Gore's doctrine differs so radically from the scholastic doctrine of the Incarnation - though superficially the two are akin. When an older traditionalist theologian speaks of Christ at one and the same time being a feeble babe in Mary's arms and disposing the stars in their courses, he means that one and the same Person possesses two complete organs of function and expression - two natures.² By the same expression, however, God would mean that the Logos himself is divided into two compartments, the Logos 'himself', and not an impersonal

1 This observation is supported by J.K. Mozley in The Expository Times, January 1929, p. 154.

2 See R.C. Moberly, Atonement And Personality, pp. 93-97.

manhood personalized by him, being the subject of the human experience of Christ."¹ Bruce, on the same criticism of Martensen, says, "But even after we have thought sufficiently long and intensely on the relation referred to, trying to conceive it as directed till the brain grows weary, we may still find such a combination hard to conceive, and ask ourselves, how can the same mind be conscious and unconscious, finite and infinite, ignorant and omniscient, at the same

1 J.S. Lawton, Op. Cit., p. 152.

Two points ought to be mentioned here as possible criticisms of this position. If Gore does mean that the Logos is "divided", then H. Rashdall in God and Man, p. 96, is justified in accusing Gore of violating the doctrine of divine Immutability, despite what Gore himself has said earlier (above, p. 119): "Certainly it is ridiculous to say that it [Christ's humanity and ignorance] is consistent with the Word being 'unchanged'." Secondly, there is the possibility that such a dual position could evacuate the Logos' self-humiliation of all real ethical significance, for it would not be God the Son incarnate in Jesus Christ but only a part of the Logos, an Incarnation without real loss. It is only right to add that Gore objects to such a criticism and maintains that "God's triune being [is] disclosed in Christ." (Bampton Lectures, p. 264, 135). But though he objects, there is reasonable doubt that he has sufficient grounds upon which to sustain his objections.

time?"¹ Gore never does define the nature of the unity of the two life centres, and really cannot without either obliterating the distinction between the Logos and Jesus Christ or advocating the orthodox position. The difficulty with this Kenotic Theory, as Gore has indicated, is the difficulty of conceiving it.

and this was the way that God and man were one and the same

¹ Bruce, Op. Cit., p. 189.

Note on Frank Weston's The One Christ

Bishop Frank Weston's Kenotic Theory is set forth in his book The One Christ first published in 1907.¹ According to J.S. Lawton, "it is ... one of the greatest theological monuments of the age ... it is practically the only full-length monograph upon the doctrine of Christ's Person produced during the period, from the point of view of dogmatic theology."² The Kenotic Theory which Weston propounds in this book bears a striking similarity to that of Charles Gore.³ The language and terms are often different,⁴ the initial points of inquiry are different, but the two men share the same thought patterns; Weston's Theory can also be cited as an example of the "Real but Relative Type" of kenoticism.

1. In this dissertation the Revised Edition published in 1914 is used.

2. J.S. Lawton, Op. Cit., p. 271.

3. Mascall, Christ, The Christian And The Church, p. vi, also finds these two men standing in the same tradition.

4. Gore begins with the authority of Scripture, Weston with the authority of the Church and Councils. But even this is not an ultimately irreconcilable division between the two men: "Experience," states Weston, "in the last resort, has its seat in the court to which Revelation makes its final appeal on earth; and the experience of the Church is voiced in the Creeds and Definitions of the Universal Councils." (The One Christ, pp. 26-27.) "The appeal from dogma to Scripture, which is taken to be one of the chief characteristics of the English theologian, is not from Dogma as such to fact as such, nor from a theory to the life of Christ. It is an appeal from an interpretation of dogma that has proved false to the original dogma of the Church, back to the original fact on which it claims to base itself. And so soon as the appeal has been heard, if it be allowed, that basal fact will be made to carry another, but true, interpretation (Ibid., p. 27.)"

It is true that Weston devotes four pages to a criticism of Gore's position, but his criticisms, at critical points, are based on a misunderstanding of Gore's true position. However, to note these misunderstandings affords one a suitable procedure for the discovery of the similarity in these two theories, at the critical points.¹

First of all, Weston criticises Gore's theory of the self-abandonment of attributes: "Thus with the extreme Kenoticists he can practically differentiate the moral attributes from the physical; but with Martensen he refuses to postulate a cessation of the Logos from His cosmic functions; and he marks off a state within which he argues for a relative abandonment by the Logos of His physical attributes."² Weston's own answer to this criticism is as follows: "The Person who became incarnate is purely divine. In His eternal essence He is of one substance with the Father, God of God; possessed of all divine powers, prerogatives, and attributes. His Incarnation in no way interferes with His true life in the eternal Godhead, or hinders Him from His divine activities in the universe. He remains true Word of God, 'upholding all things by the word of His power.' Nor on the other hand does His Incarnation involve Him in the absolute abandonment of any one of the

1. In such a procedure, I have taken the liberty to quote at length so that the actual similarity might be observable at the source and not from the summary.
 2. Weston, Op. Cit., p. 124.

attributes of His divinity. Whatever of self-limitation is required, He always remains in possession of His powers, recognizing a law of restraint where restraint is necessary. His continuous respect of this law of self-restraint constitutes His act of self-sacrifice and obedience.¹ But is not this statement of Weston's more truly representative of Gore's thought than that which Weston has attributed to him? Gore is constantly searching for terms to modify such descriptive phrases as "self-emptying," "self-renouncing," "self-abnegation," which might suggest such a separation of attributes. Hence the introduction of such terms as "self-limiting," "self-restraining," "self-accomodating."²

Again, Gore, in his Bampton Lectures and Dissertations, does not discuss at length the attributes of God; but he does have this to say: "Of the results of this self-emptying we can only judge by the record in the Gospels. That our Lord could not lose His personality, or essential relation to the Father, is indeed certain a priori and is confirmed in the record. The personality is, then, throughout the same; but in regard to the divine attributes, what He retained in exercise and what He abandoned - whether He abandoned only the manifest glory, or also, for example the exercise of the divine omniscience - we could hardly form any judgment

1. Weston, Op. Cit., pp. 149-150.

2. See Gore above, p.129.

a priori ..."¹ It would seem from the above argument that Gore considers that the state and possession of attributes are beyond the area of legitimate questioning and that the continuity of personality is the important thing. This rejection of the false separation is also borne out by Gore's criticism of the position of Fairbairn and Thomasius: "It [Fairbairn's Kenotic Theory] maintains a real continuity of conscious life so far as the ethical qualities of the Son of God are concerned. But it distinguishes His ethical from His physical attributes, and conceives Him as abandoning the latter absolutely in becoming incarnate. Thus, as much as M. Godet, Dr. Fairbairn postulates that Christ did absolutely abandon His relation of equality with God and His functions in the universe. But it is chiefly from this point of view that the view of M. Godet was criticized, and the same considerations apply to this more moderate but hardly, I think, more tenable view."² And again, Gore insists that the Incarnation must be viewed as a sphere³ of the Son's activity; the Son has not essentially changed but has accommodated Himself to the confines of human existence. This is substantially, but less specifically, what Weston maintains.

1. Gore, Bampton Lectures, p. 195.

2. Gore, Dissertations, pp. 191-192.

3. See Gore above, pp. 106-107.

Second Weston asserts that Gore "is, of course, entirely clear in his assertion of the true divinity of the person of the Incarnate, His miraculous birth of the Virgin Mary, and the constitution of the manhood in the Logos Himself, but he speaks of a self-abandonment of powers incommensurate with humanity."¹ In contrast to this alleged position of Gore's, Weston states: "The Incarnate is the Son of God, in whose image man was made. He has come Himself, and by an act of supreme love and power He so measures His divine power that He can adequately serve as the proper subject or ego of His assumed manhood,"² But is this not, again, Gore's position?: "He [Son of God] did.... - doubtless by the voluntary action of His own self-limiting and self-restraining³ love - cease from the exercise of those divine functions and powers, including the divine omniscience, which would have been incompatible with a truly human experience."⁴

Third, "It is to be inferred from the Bishop's theory," states Weston, "that as Incarnate the eternal Son had so stripped Himself of omniscience and other attributes of the same class that He could adequately serve as ego to His

1. Weston, Op. Cit., p. 124.

2. Ibid., p. 151.

3. My italics.

4. Gore, Dissertations, pp. 94-95.

assumed manhood. But there is no hint that the Son of God had assumed a human individuality. There is no talk of personal manhood. Dr. Gore seems to mean that the Incarnate knows Himself as Son of God in manhood, through the medium of His human soul.¹ Rather than this position, Weston proposes the following: "To the end that manhood should be so aided to perfection the eternal Son assumed it into personal union with Himself. He did not take a manhood, in the sense that He associated with Himself one human person; for that would have been to redeem one at the cost of the race. But in Mary's womb He took human flesh which, with its own proper and complete soul, He constituted Himself so that He became truly man, living as the subject or ego of real manhood."² However, contrary to Weston's criticism, Gore does give a 'hint' of personal manhood and, in fact, supports a position strikingly like Weston's. In defending the logic of the necessity for the Virgin Birth, Gore argues: "Granted that the eternal Son of God did at a certain moment of time take flesh by a real incarnation in the womb of Mary, - granted that He was born as man, without change of personality [Weston's "ego"] or addition of another personality, but simply by the assumption of a new

1. Weston, Op. Cit., p. 125.

2. Ibid., pp. 150-151.

nature and by an entrance into new conditions of life and experience - granted in this sense the incarnation of the Son of God in the womb of Mary, can we conceive it to have taken place by the ordinary process of generation?"¹ "He is very man, but new man."²

Fourth, "The difficulty of this [Gore's] language to me lies in the dual conception of the Logos as unlimited and as self-abandoned. It seems possible to argue that the Word as self-abandoned has a different self-consciousness from the eternal Word as unlimited; and that the self-emptied Son as conditioned by manhood requires a form of self-consciousness that is different from both. In the first case, we have divine self-consciousness; in the second, one that is so far from being fully divine that we can only term it impoverished divine; and in the third case we have what the Bishop calls human consciousness, meaning in fact divine consciousness impoverished and then conditioned in manhood.

"So that even if we shut out from the sphere of the Incarnation the conception of the unlimited Logos as fully conscious of His divine Self and position, we are still face to face with two centres of consciousness in the Incarnate: the one in which He knows Himself as self-impoverished divine - knows Himself, that is, as less than Himself; the other, in which He knows Himself as self-impoverished divine conditioned by manhood. It seems to me that we must make this logical

1. Gore, Dissertations, p. 64.

2. Ibid., p. 65.

distinction, and, once made, we have robbed the theory of its practical advantage and, therefore, of its only appeal.¹ In opposition to this position, Weston replies: within the Incarnation "the Son necessarily has a knowledge of Himself, in His relations Godward and manward, that does not belong to His universal life as Logos. The Incarnate is the Son of God existing only under conditions of manhood. In what sense, then, was He conscious of Himself?

"We may arrive at an answer by a process of elimination. First, He did not know Himself as God the Son possessed of and exercising unlimited power. His state of eternal glory was, as it were, a memory to Him:² but His human mind was, and is, so inferior to the Divine Nature that it could not mediate an act of Self-Knowledge as the Eternal God, in the glorious liberty of divine power; otherwise manhood would indeed be equal with Godhead.

"Secondly, He did not know Himself as merely a man; for His self is divine. He was conscious of divinity,³ And thirdly, He did not know Himself as divine-human in composite consciousness; for He had not associated any human person with Himself.

"It remains therefore to say that He was conscious of Himself as God-in-manhood. He knew Himself as God just in so far as a perfect, sinless, God-assumed soul could mediate the divine self-consciousness. God the Son had become man, and knew Himself only so far as His human soul could mediate

1. Weston, Op. Cit., pp. 125-126.

2. Cites John 17:5.

3. Cites John 5:17, 8:58, 10:30, 14:23, etc.

that knowledge. As His Soul is the everlasting, and only perfect, means of the Unveiling of the Godhead to man in the Kingdom of Glory; so on earth it was His only medium of His Vision of His Father. We have seen how truly He had taken manhood into Himself; how He had willed that it should mediate all His new relationships with the Father and the world. If, then, these relationships were those of an intelligent, personal being they must have been based in a consciousness of self as entirely limited and conditioned by manhood.

"It is not that He knew Himself to be unlimited Logos, who had willed to respect the limitations of manhood. No, more than that. He knew Himself as Logos only in the measure that His human soul could be made to mediate that self-knowledge. But all the while in His universal state He was, nay is, the unlimited Logos who wills to be for evermore in such special relations of love to the redeemed that, in the¹ sphere in which He meets with them, He is prepared to² accept this limited content of self-consciousness." Here again, one is forced to say that Weston's position is really a detailed exposition of Gore's argument and that the position Weston attributes to Gore is not correct. Actually Gore maintains that "Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate, was and is, at every moment and in every act, both God and man,

1. My italics.

2. Weston, Op. Cit., pp. 167-169.

personally God made man; He is as truly God at His birth or death as now in His glory, and as truly man now in His glory¹ as formerly in His human birth and mortal life ..."² As well, " ... the words in which we express the mystery [of the Incarnation].... must be words which express the fact that, within the period and sphere³ of His incarnate and mortal life, He the eternal Son was, doubtless by His own act and will, submitting Himself to the limitations proper to manhood."⁴ From these two central propositions of Gore's theory, it is possible to deduce not Weston's concept of Gore's argument, but Weston's theory itself. Both men could agree with the following statement: "... the Logos, in His state of Divine Glory, possesses a true consciousness of Himself as God the Son, omnipotent and omniscient. In virtue of His omniscient wisdom, by His omnipotent power, He ever imposes upon Himself a law of self-restraint, so framed that, in the Incarnate State, His exercise of His own proper powers is at every moment to be adapted to the measure of the capacity of His ever-growing manhood. As living under this law, within the conditions of manhood, He knows Himself not as God the Son exercising full divine power through a free and unlimited Divine Nature, but as God the Son limited and conditioned in manhood; and unable to

1. Weston agrees (Op. Cit., p. 194): "the manhood of Christ is His proper, assumed nature to all eternity. The state of the Incarnation is permanent."

2. Gore, Dissertations, p. 95.

3. My *italics* - notice even the similarity of language here with Weston (*italics* above).

4. Gore, Op. Cit., pp. 203-204.

act or speak or think outside the limits imposed upon Him by His manhood. So living and so conforming to the law of self-restraint He is the centre of the new relationships with His Father and His creatures that make up the life of the Incarnation; the existence of these relationships depending upon the indwelling of all creatures by the unlimited Logos in virtue of His omnipresence, and upon the reality of the limited self-consciousness of the Logos as Incarnate.¹

Weston makes two major contributions to this type of Kenotic Theory. The first contribution comes at the point where Gore is most severely criticised - the nature of the person of the Son of God in his dual capacity.² Weston endeavours to solve the dilemma by his concept of personality. He argues that the ego who is the Subject of the Son in His divine capacities is likewise the Subject of the Son in His human capacities. This he deems possible by arguing that personality is the sum of its various relationships: "... the state of the Son of God at any one moment is merely the sum of His relationships. As His glorious, heavenly state is in fact His internal relations with the Father and the Holy Spirit together with His relation to the world that His wisdom has created; so His

1. Weston, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 179-180.

2. Gore states simply and without explanation - "The personality is ... throughout the Incarnation the same" Bampton Lectures, p. 159. For criticism see "Gore", pp. 142-146.

state of incarnation is the sum of certain new relations which He has willed to form, in respect to the incarnate activities, with His creatures, and with the Father and the Spirit in so far as His peculiar indwelling of the redeemed and His office of Mediator render necessary an addition to His essential relations.

"Between these two states there is no definite separation. To demand a conception of the mutual exclusiveness of the two states of activity will be found ultimately to differentiate the Eternal Son as God from the Eternal Son as Incarnate; and in doing this we reduce the Incarnation to a figure of speech. That the Person who sat wearied on the well of Samaria is personally and identically the Eternal Son of God, who upholds¹ all things by the word of His power, must ever be maintained."

Although this position may answer some of the questions which Gore avoids, it is not accepted altogether without criticism. J.S. Lawton brings the following arguments against Weston's position: "The possibility of this [the divine ego as proper subject of Christ's manhood] is clearly Weston's major premise. It rests upon two conditions. First, it must be possible for an ego in certain portions of its activity to be dissociated from its conscious content and relationships enjoyed elsewhere; and secondly, it must be conceived possible for an ego to retain its self-identity, and yet be the subject of another set of relationships. The difficulty in all this

1. Weston, Op. Cit., p. 22.

stated here in order that it may be kept in mind during the discussion, is that it either makes too much or too little of the idea of ego. On the one hand, if the Logos can constitute himself the centre of a new personality, by adding to himself a new set of incidental relationships, it is difficult to see how that perfect self-identity fails to carry with it something of the divine omniscience which, according to Weston, is so integral a part of the divine personality. If, on the other hand, the idea be taken quite seriously that consciousness and hence personality can be and are constituted by their content, 'the sum of relationships'; and that a personality so constituted can be united to the divine ego without sharing in the divine omniscience; if in other words, the idealist view of personality be taken quite literally, as Weston apparently does, since he conceives Christ to have had real and not merely superficial human consciousness - it is difficult to see how the divine ego in such a personality can or does play any greater part than mere abstraction, which contributes nothing to the content of the personality save its identity ..."¹

Weston's second contribution is an attempt to solve the same problem of dual centres of activity by the Kantian² concept of personality in terms of will. "In postulating

1. Lawton, Op. Cit., pp. 275-276. Such a position would also imply that Christ's death was not a real death but only the termination of one set of relationships. On this last point see A.B. Macaulay: The Death of Jesus, Ch. 6.
2. This is a concept used to some extent by P.T. Forsyth to emphasize that personality is free, active, and responsible. See Bradley, Op. Cit., p. 199.

a single self-consciousness of the Christ as God in manhood, we must not be taken to mean that He was possessed of only one will.

"We have seen that His self-consciousness was in no way composite: and we must be on our guard against attributing to the Christ one composite will. The danger of so doing arises from the tendency to isolate the divine person from the divine nature and functions; and so to think of the divine will as apart from His person that we can conceive it either becoming associated with the human will by some kind of moral identity, or serving Him as an instrument by which to subdue His human will. All this kind of thought could be avoided were we to bear in mind that the will is a function of a person, inseparable from him. It is not a part of him: it is a mode of his self-manifestation."¹ "It is quite a false antithesis that men draw when they distinguish between Jesus and His divine will, as if it were a mere function of His divine Self. It is His Self in action. We therefore confess two wills in the Lord Jesus; but we admit that the only evident expression of His Self is that given to us through His human will, in human action.

"And the union of the two wills is not merely one of moral identity: it exists in Jesus Himself, the Person, who is Divine Will.

1. Weston, Op. Cit., pp. 187-188.

"We may say of the Incarnate that His acts of self-consciousness, like His acts of willing, are two, since His natures are two; but His self-knowledge is really one, and the result of His willing is one."¹ These statements are consistent with those expressed by Weston on personality, but such consistency likewise means that the criticism brought by J.S. Lawton is equally valid here. With two wills as with two centres, true self-consciousness seems impossible or inconceivable.

1. Ibid., p. 189. It is perhaps this idea which leads Hastings Rashdall to state "It is curious to note that that fiery malleus hereticorum, the Bishop of Zanzibar, quite definitely lapses into Monothelism." Hastings Rashdall, God and Man, p. 70.

CHAPTER V

P.T. FORSYTH

REAL BUT POTENTIAL TYPE

P. T. Forsyth
(Real but Potential)¹

There are two men who might equally well serve as exponents of this type of Kenotic Theory - H.R. Mackintosh and P.T. Forsyth. In his essay in Mysterium Christi,² J.M. Creed singled out H.R. Mackintosh as the representative man, but since that time (and since the 're-discovery' of P.T. Forsyth) many have turned to Forsyth as the earlier, more creative, and more original of the two men. J.S. Lawton, in an article about Creed's essay, states, "Forsyth [as opposed to Creed's use of Mackintosh] would equally well have served the purpose of exemplification, had it been possible so concisely to summarize his thought."³ His The Person and Place of Jesus Christ appeared in 1907, and - though this was not so clearly seen when Creed wrote - it is one of the most important works on Christology that

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- 1 Because Forsyth was writing after Bruce's classification in The Humiliation of Christ, this classification represents my own opinion.
 - 2 Essay VI, "Recent Tendencies in English Christology."
 - 3 Principal H.P. Lovell Cocks (who studied under Forsyth) of Bristol is not quite so harsh in his appraisal: "... two or three of his [Forsyth's] books represent genuine attempts to conduct a systematic argument, and of these the earliest and most successful is The Person and Place of Jesus Christ." The Expository Times, Vol. 64, No. 7 (April, 1953), p.195.

this country has produced in the present century."¹ In the light of these reports of recent scholarship, the Kenotic Theory of P.T. Forsyth has been chosen as the subject of this chapter and H.R. Mackintosh's Theory will be introduced where relevant.

P.T. Forsyth approaches the problem of Kenotic Christology in a way different from that of the previous Kenoticists. Instead of formulating a linear equation by inductive, empirical methods, the solution to which is the Kenotic Theory,² Forsyth finds the Theory as a logical, necessary deduction from the existential situation which is the result of Christ's redemptive act. Thus any exposition must begin not with a theological conviction or metaphysic but with a positive, personal religious experience of Him. "...the principle from which we must set out to understand the person of Christ is the soteriological principle. Any metaphysic must follow that and not precede it; it must be a metaphysic of history and

1 J.S. Lawton, "Creed's Essay in 'Mysterium Christi,'" The Expository Times, Vol. 64, No. 2 (November, 1952), p.47. Principal Philip S. Watson, Handsworth College, Birmingham, in an article entitled "The Kenosis Doctrine in H.R. Mackintosh's 'The Person of Jesus Christ'" says, "Outstanding among them [British theologians] was W.M. Fairbairn, Charles Gore, P.T. Forsyth, and Mackintosh, who in the third main section of his book develops his own version of the doctrine, showing himself incidentally in very close sympathy with Forsyth." The Expository Times, Vol. 64, No. 3 (December, 1952) p. 68.

2 As Fairbairn, Forrest, and Gore.

not of being, of soul and not of substance, of the moral soul and not the noetic substance, of ethic and not of thought - and especially of the Christian ethic condensed in faith as the new life. All Christology must rest on a moral salvation, spiritually and personally realized. And any metaphysic involved must be the metaphysic of redemption, which is only the superlative of a metaphysic of ethics."¹ Forsyth readily admits that such an approach based upon faith "is not rational in the coherent, the scientific, the systematic sense of the word rational;"² but then, life itself, he states, transcends thought.³ This approach even gives Biblical Criticism a new orientation: "It is no way to deal with so great a blessing as criticism arbitrarily to challenge or curb its rights.

- 1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p.332. Mackintosh, The Person of Jesus Christ agrees: "There will always be metaphysic in Christology, but it ought to be a metaphysic of the conscience, in which not substance but Holy Love is supreme." R.L. Ottley, The Doctrine of the Incarnation states: "The kenosis or self-limitation of the Divine Son is necessarily a mysterious fact of which no adequate conception can be formed from a metaphysical or purely logical a priori standpoint. It must throughout be viewed ethically, as the act of a being who is akin to man in that which is highest and most distinctive of moral personality, namely, self-determining will and self-sacrificing love." p. 285
- 2 Forsyth, Op. Cit., p.305
- 3 Ibid.

The way is to fix our faith beyond its reach. It is to return to the Epistles for the key of the Gospels, for the evangelical secret, and the principle of the Highest Criticism of all. The judgement of the cross criticises all criticism, and the finality of its felt salvation is the rock impregnable."¹

Beginning, then, with the personal redemptive experience of Christ as a realized fact, what can be deduced? Forsyth maintains that this experience implies and necessitates the pre-existence of Christ and bases his argument upon the nature of the Trinity. Christ exercises the prerogatives of forgiveness, judgement, and redemption - the prerogatives of God; but, says Forsyth, "the power to exercise [these prerogatives] ... could never have been acquired by the moral excellence or religious achievement of any created being, however endowed by the spirit of God."² These prerogatives obviously imply the most intimate identification with God, and "such a relation... to the Father could not have arisen at a point of time."³ A second argument supporting the necessity of Christ's pre-existence is based upon the unchangeable nature of God. "If at one moment in history Christ performed the reconciling work, a change in the

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p.318
 2 Ibid., p.269.
 3 Ibid.

nature of God would be necessitated unless there were in that act an external aspect thus then becoming actualised. God's nature must be unchangeable, for His holiness guarantees this; nothing which has happened within time could be allowed to alter the very character of the Eternal."¹

Following this line of argument, Forsyth finds the Kenotic Theory as a necessary description of Jesus' earthly, physical life: "If there was a personal pre-existence in the case of Christ it does not seem possible to adjust it to the historic Jesus without some doctrine of Kenosis. We face in Christ a Godhead self-reduced but real, whose infinite power took effect in self-humiliation, whose strength was perfected in weakness, who consented not to know with an ignorance divinely wise, and who emptied himself in virtue of his divine fulness."² To those who might question the necessity of a Kenotic position at this point rather than the traditional

1 Bradley, P.T. Forsyth, p. 194.
Forsyth, Op. Cit. p. 273.

2 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, pp. 293-294. Mackintosh at this point agrees, but is more specific in his argument:

"Four positions may be taken, I think, as implicit in the completely Christian view of Jesus; and it is difficult to see how Kenoticism in some form is to be avoided by one who asserts them all, and at the same time believes that a reasoned Christology is possible. They may be put as follows:

(1)

Chalcedonian formula of two natures, Forsyth has some very definite things to say: "The formula of the union of two natures in one person is essentially a metaphysical formula, and the formula of a Hellenic metaphysic, and it is more or less archaic for the modern mind. The term 'nature' is a purely metaphysical term, and one which characterises a scholastic metaphysic of being

2 (contd. from p.)

- (1) Christ is now Divine, as being the object of faith and worship, with whom believing men have immediate, though not unmediated, fellowship.
 - (2) In some personal sense His Divinity is eternal, not the fruit of time, since by definition Godhead cannot have come to be ex nihilo; His pre-mundane being therefore is real, not ideal merely.
 - (3) His life on earth was unequivocally human. Jesus was a man, a Jew of the first century, with a life localised in and restricted by a body organic to His self-consciousness; of limited power, which could be, and was, thwarted by persistent unbelief; of limited knowledge, which, being gradually built up by experience, made Him liable to surprise and disappointment; of a moral nature susceptible of growth, and exposed to life-long temptation; of a piety and personal religion characterised at each point by dependence on God. In short, He moved always within the lines of an experience humanly normal in constitution, even if abnormal in its sinless quality. The life Divine in Him found expression through human faculty, with a self-consciousness and activity mediated by His human milieu.
 - (4) We cannot predicate of Him two consciousnesses or two wills; the New Testament indicates nothing of the kind, nor indeed is it congruous with an intelligible psychology. The unity of His personal life is axiomatic."
- The Person of Jesus Christ, pp. 469-470.

rather than a modern metaphysic of ethic."¹

Consequently "its categories were too elemental and physical. It conceived it [the union of natures] as an act of might, of immediate divine power, an act which united the two natures into a person rather than through that person. It united them miraculously rather than morally, into the existence of the incarnate personality rather than by his action. The person was the resultant of the two natures rather than the agent of their union. They were united into a person whose action only began after the union, and did not affect it."²

Accepting the fact of Christ's pre-existence, what was the motive which led Him to humiliate Himself in such a manner? Here Forsyth agrees with other Kenoticists and asserts that the reason is 'man's redemption:' "...considering man's actual sinful state, this [kingdom of holy love] can only be effected by redemption. To this end the Son of God sympathetically renounces the glory of His Heavenly state."³ But not even this is yet the 'heart' of the motive.

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p.229

2 Ibid., p. 223

3 Ibid., p. 313. Mackintosh agrees in a negative way - "For in so far as He remained rich - in the same sense of riches - and gave up nothing to be near us, our need of a Divine Helper to bear our load would be still unsatisfied. What we require is the never-failing sympathy which takes shape in action.." Op. Cit. p. 467.

Forsyth goes back one further step and declares that "He [the Son] does it for God's sake more than for man's, for love of the Holy more even than of the sinner, to glorify the Holy through the sinner, and to hallow His name."¹ In this way an ethical and spiritual unity is maintained by God and His creation, for Christ the "all-holy peer....does it by the holy way, by a moral act of love, and not by a tour de force."² God's love for man returns to Him in full.

The question of whether or not the Incarnation is possible does not cause Forsyth the least difficulty: "If the Creator could not have become immanent in creation His infinity would have been curtailed by all the powers and dimensions of space. And if immanence could not pass by a new act into incarnation then God would have been lost in his world, and the world lost to God."³ The emphasis for Forsyth falls upon the words "new act", i.e. there is no precedent or pattern which God must follow; it would be sheer sophistry to

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 313

2 Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 314.

mark the possibilities of God.¹ Such a new act must have occurred if Christ's uniqueness is to be preserved. "...it is by a new creative act - not by prolonging the old process; not by a culmination in Christ of the soul of the world, not as the summit of God's identity with the world; but by a unique, crowning, and moral act of self-identification. Immanence cannot explain incarnation, which is a new departure of more moral nature. The incarnation is not God's identity with the world prolonged, but a new self-identification, which is yet older than the world."² Here, again, Forsyth puts emphasis upon the moral nature of the Incarnation.³ It is a moral act which accounts for the uniqueness of Christ's person. "...God is God not physically but morally, not by power but by love...The nature of the Godhead is Holy Love. It can do, not everything conceivable to freakish fancy, but...

1 "If the infinite God was so constituted that he could not live also as a finite man then he was not infinite. There was a limitation to that extent on His power's infinity, and one which he Himself did not impose. But if He did live as finite man, then so far was it from being a limitation of His freedom (except externally and formally) that it was the greatest exercise of it. It was the greatest act of moral freedom ever done." Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 315.

2 Ibid., p. 316.

3 Above, p. 169.

everything that is prescribed by Holy Love."¹ Forsyth considers the Incarnation as "an exercise of sanctity, and not an exertion of strength."² By putting the Incarnation into such a perspective, he endeavours to escape the metaphysical contradictions which mark the theories of Forrest and Fairbairn.³ Christ, states Forsyth, "limits Himself in the freedom of holiness for the purposes of His own end of infinite love."⁴

As might be expected, such a creative, moral act of God must be, by the very nature of the occasion, to some extent inexplicable: "If we ask how Eternal Godhead could make the actual condition of human nature His own, we must answer....that we do not know."⁵ "We Cannot form any scientific conception of the precise process by which a complete and eternal being could enter on a process of becoming, how Godhead could accept growth, how a divine consciousness could reduce its own

1 Forsyth, The person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 313

2 Ibid.

3 Forrest, (p. 74 , Fairbairn, pp. 30-31.

4 Forsyth, Op. Cit., p. 311.

5 Forsyth, Op. Cit., p. 320.

consciousness by volition. ... Even if we admit psychologically that certain attributes could be laid aside - the less ethical attributes like omniscience, omnipotence, or ubiquity - could self-consciousness be thus impaired and a love still remain which was fully divine? And how can an infinite consciousness be thought of as reducing itself to a finite? God's infinite consciousness might indeed determine itself so as to pervade, sustain, and bind a variety of finite detail without losing consciousness. An immanent God, we believe, does so in creation. But if He parted with His self-consciousness as infinite would it not come as near to suicide as infinite could?"¹ But, the fact of the Incarnation still confronts Forsyth, and though he declines to explain how it occurred, he does give a clue to his explanation of what has occurred. "God has done things for His own which it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive."² It is the miracle behind all miracle.

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, pp. 294-295.

2 Mackintosh: "It is vain to speak as if the view-point of Deity were our own, or to ignore the peripheral character of our judgements; and any construction of Christ's person in which the modern mind is to feel and interest must start from, and proceed through, the known facts of His human life. The Person of Jesus Christ, pp. 468-469.

All detailed miracle was but its expression. It is the miracle of grace. And it can be realized (little as it can be conceived) only by the faith that grace creates, that answers grace, and works by love. ...Love alone has any key to those renunciations which do not mean the suicide but the finding of the Soul."¹

The redeeming Christ of faith authenticates, and becomes one with, the Jesus of History. The Christian is confronted, within the faith, with the mysterious fact of the God-man. Knowledge of Him is experiential and not scientific, a matter of religious faith and not metaphysic. This approach obviously governs Forsyth's description of the *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ*; it is not so much a description of the act of exinanition as a description of a new mode of being. Forsyth feels that "there is something presumptuous in certain kenotic efforts to body forth just what the Son must have gone through in such an experience."² "Let us cease speaking of a nature as if it were an entity; of two natures as two independent entities; and let us think and speak of two modes of being, like quantitative and qualitative, or physical and moral. Instead of speaking of certain attributes as renounced may we not speak of a new mode of their being? The Son, by an act of love's omnipotence, set aside the style of a God, and took the style

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 320.

2. Ibid.

of a servant, the mental manner of a man, and the mode of moral action that marks human nature. ...Take the attribute of omniscience, for instance. In its eternal form, it is an intuitive and simultaneous knowledge of all things; but when the Eternal enters time it becomes a discursive and successive knowledge, with the power to know all things only potential, and enlarging to become actual under the moral conditions that govern human growth and the extension of human knowledge. Here we have not so much the renunciation of attributes, nor their conscious possession and concealment, as the retraction of their mode of being from actual to potential.¹ The stress falls on the mode of existence of these qualities, and not on their presence or absence."² This reduction from actual to potential is an important point in Forsyth's thinking, and one of the aspects which make this theory a positive contribution to 'Kenotic' thinking. The attributes of God, when reduced, are not destroyed but are concentrated. "The self-reduction, or self-retraction of God might be a

1 Mackintosh states: "It is possible to conceive the Son, who has entered at love's behest on the region of growth and progress, as not possessing all the qualities of God head in the form of concentrated potency rather than of full actuality, *δυναμις* rather than *ἐνέργεια*." The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 477.

2 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, pp. 307-308.

better phrase than the self-emptying."¹ Forsyth wants to escape the error of advocating so complete a metamorphosis that a mere man results from *Kénosis*. "No creature could become God."² Therefore, "The divine qualities were kept, but only in the mode that salvation made necessary. Jesus did not know everything actually, empirically, but only what was needful for that work. But as that is the central final work in human nature, the knowledge required for it contains the promise and potency of all knowledge. And as to the exercise of power, he did what God alone could do in forgiving human sin, a salvation which is the nucleus and germ of all worthy power beside. His knowledge, his power, his presence were all adjusted to his vocation. His vocation was not to apply or exhibit omnipotence, but to effect the will of infinite love, and master all that set itself against that. And that divine vocation was only possible to one who had a divine position. The world's Redeemer must be the Son of God."³ But even here Forsyth's distinction does not end. When he speaks of the attributes of God as "divine qualities"⁴ which in Christ display a new mode, he is indicating that an

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p.308

2 Ibid., p. 294

3 Ibid., p. 320

4 Above, (..

attribute, per se, is something which cannot be divested but "is only the Being [of God] himself in a certain angle and relation¹.... Thus omniscience and the rest are not so much attributes as functions of attributes, or their modifications. Omnipotence means not that God should be able to do anything and everything that fancy may suggest; but that, in working his will of love, God is, from his own free resource, equal to all it involves, and is really determined by nothing outside himself.² Omnipresence, as absolute independence of space, means that God is not hampered by space, but can enter spatial relations without being tied by them, can exist in limits without being unfree or ceasing to be God. ...So it is with the divine omniscience. Omniscience is only a detailed aspect of God's absoluteness, incidental to the existence of a creation."³

Since the *κένωσις* is considered a "moral" act, qualitative rather than quantitative in character, it involves more than the expression of the fact of potentialism. As a moral act, it involves relationship

1 This should not be confused with Gore's "sphere" or "period" of God's existence. Though the two ideas are superficially similar, there is no idea of "potential" in Gore's theory.

2 Mackintosh, The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 473.

3 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, pp. 309-310.

and this is a second way in which Forsyth views *kenosis*. "Christ's self-limitation is interpreted by Forsyth in terms of obedience. . . . It is to be comprehended only in moral terms. It was the obedience of Christ to His Father's will which characterised the kenosis; this applies, not only to His human life, but also to His pre-existent choice. His whole life was one of obedience to the Father, and that fulfilment of God's will stems from freedom rather than command. The kenosis refers in a very real sense to God, yet the distinction between Father and Son must not be imperilled; it was the Son who chose to obey the Father, not because He had to, but because of His holy love."¹ "God sent his Son, he did not emit him, he did not think him. The heavenly side of salvation was not ideal simply but historic, though it was premundane history. It was an eternal and immutable transaction. Things were done there. God sent; the Son came."² "Unlike us, he chose the oblivion of birth and the humiliation of life. He consented not only to die but

¹ Bradley, pp. 201-202.

² Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 272.

to be born."¹ The two quotations immediately above - "God sent..." and "the Son chose..." - would seem contradictory, but their co-existence as fact is made possible by Forsyth's doctrine of the Trinity (Again it is possible to see the complex unity of Forsyth's system, for this present point depends upon and supports his doctrine of the Immutability of God).² He is careful to avoid either the charge of Polytheism or Modalism.³ "The divine energy was concentrated for the special work to be done. The fulness of the Son's Godhead was still the essence of Christ. That Godhead

1 The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 271. Mackintosh, in this instance, is a bit more cautious than Forsyth -: there is a great "religious peril of so separating the Father from the Son in a cosmic reference as to endanger the monotheistic view of the Trinity and negative the inseparabilis trinitatis operatio so memorably emphasised by Augustine. If the term 'person' in Trinitarian doctrine is more than 'aspect', it is certainly less than 'individual'. After all, it is a fundamental truth that the world is upheld by God, not by a constituent or part of God. These are spheres in which division of labour is unmeaning. We must simply confess that we know nothing of an existence of the Logos apart from but synchronous with His reality in Jesus, and that statements of a dogmatic character on the subject have no apprehensible reality for our minds." The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 485.

2 Above, p. 167.

3 When Forsyth speaks of viewing the incarnation as another 'mode of being' (above, p. 174), he is not asserting the historic modalist position, i.e. that Christ was the sole Self-expression of God during the Incarnation phase.

lost nothing in the saving act. It took the whole power of Godhead to save; it was not the Son's work alone; far less than was it the work of any impaired Son."¹ For unity, the Godhead is essential, but this does not mean the Godhead in the fulness of its power. "As God, the Son in his freedom would have a kenotic power over Himself corresponding to the infinite power of self-determination which belongs to deity. ...The infinite mobility of the changeless God in becoming human growth only assumes a special phase of itself."² This is, in fact, the principle: opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa expressed in practice. "Christ's emptying of Himself is... one of the powers of His Godhead, and not a denial of it. He could not have emptied Himself but for His Godhead."³

Forsyth completes his description of the *kénosis* by adding to the description of fact and to the description of divine relationship, the description of

- 1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 319.
- 2 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 300. Principal H.F. Lovell Cocks remarks: "What he [Forsyth] seems to be contending for is the Hebraic sense of Divine changelessness as opposed to the Hellenic - the changelessness of Divine holiness, the stability and utter steadfastness of God's righteous, saving purpose." Op. Cit., p. 195.
- 3 Forsyth, The Taste of Death, p. 96.

human relationship, i.e. Christ's place in man's redemption. As in the other two descriptions, love is the beginning point: God's love "is an almighty love in the sense that it is capable of limiting itself, and, while an end, becoming also a means, to an extent adequate to all love's infinite ends. This self-renouncing, self-retracting act of the Son's will, this reduction of Himself from the supreme end to be the supreme means for the soul, is no negation of his nature; it is the opposite, it is the last assertion of his nature as love."¹ This brings one, by a second route, to the initial point, "the Incarnate is immediately known to us only as the Saviour";² He who is the Means identifies Himself as the End. "Christ's sense of finality we must recognise; which is his Faith, however implicit, in his own Godhead. We must acknowledge his sense of his own finality in the last moral issue of the world, the supreme human issue, the issue between God and man, life and death. He knew he was decisive in that issue. And who could be final or decisive there but God?

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, pp. 313-314. Mackintosh agrees: "Now it is not at all excessive to say that what Christ reveals in God is rather the infinite mobility of absolute grace bent on the redemption of the lost, the willingness to do and bear whatever is compatible with a moral nature. What is immutable in God is the holy love which makes His essence." The Person of Jesus Christ p. 473.

2 Ibid., p. 333.

The final revelation could only be God revealing Himself, in the sense of God bestowing Himself, and Himself coming to men to restore communion."¹ As Means and End He "combined in His person two 'vertical' movements: that of God towards man and of man towards God."² When the person of God is viewed through the eyes of faith, He is seen as Jesus Christ, the man within whom the Godhead is real but potential, the Son who chose to be sent by God the Father, and God who Himself became the supreme Means to the salvation found only in Himself; these aspects comprise the divine *κένωσις* and are self-authenticated by Him in the individual's experience of redemption.

Do these descriptions of *κένωσις* exclude a real doctrine of Christ's manhood? Would not the knowledge of His own position preclude any actual experience as man? Forsyth believes not. "Christ at the world's

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, pp. 92-93
 W.L. Walker, The Gospel of Reconciliation, p. 169
 states: "The life of God is for ever the same life of self-denial and self-sacrifice, because it is the life of perfect love. Out of His overflowing fulness He is constantly giving of Himself in creation in order to find Himself again in those whom He has raised to participation in the Divine Life. This is that eternal *kenosis* in which 'the Son' is for ever passing out of 'the Father' and again returning to the bosom of God."

2 Bradley, p. 199.

crisis became man - not a brilliant man, but true man, normal man."¹ "Christ's manhood...consists in the moral reality of his experience, his conflict, and his growth. It means his true ethical personality growing in an actual historic situation. It means that he counted in the public of his age, and really inhabited its milieu. It means that he filled a mighty place in the social situation of his land and time, and that the immediate reference of all he said and did was to that situation, however vast, and even infinite, the total horizon was, the total bearing of his action or speech. And above it all it means that his action arose ethically out of what he was, that his carriage expressed his soul, that his vocation rested on his position.... His identity with man lay in no mere continuity of substance, nor even in participating in personality, but in his assumption of man's conditions of personality, and his renunciation of God's."²

As can be seen, the traditional problem of Christ's ignorance is not a great obstacle for Forsyth. He assumes Christ's limitation and dismisses the question without further comment - "We could not have in the same person both knowledge and ignorance of the

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 310.

2 Ibid., pp. 351-353.

same thing. If he did not know it he was altogether ignorant of it."¹ Two other points in connection with Christ's humanity occupy more of his interest: His growth and His sinlessness. "We should take more seriously the growth of Jesus. We are all agreed that Jesus grew in obedience, learning it by the things that he suffered. He was not simply an event in history; he had himself a history, which is the moral marrow of all history. His natural consciousness grew, and the content of it grew, as he grew from child to man, and came to know the world. His spiritual consciousness, his sense of sonship, also grew, as he settled the conflicts that beset him about his Messiahship."² Growth, of course, includes 'moral growth' which is important in Forsyth's interpretation: "The history of Christ's growth is then a history of moral reintegration, the history of his recovery, by gradual moral conquest, of the mode

1. Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 319
It should be noted here that Forsyth is writing in reaction to the 'Jesus of History' trend in Christology, and therefore he is assuming that many of the common assertions about Christ's manhood are known and accepted by the reader. He is not interested in denying these assertions but in establishing the essential divinity of Christ, which gives such assertions their universal validity and value.

2. Ibid., p. 121.

of being from which, by a tremendous moral act,¹ he came. It is reconquest. ...He won by duty what was his own by right."² But then Forsyth adds a warning: "...amid all that we recognise in him of human conditions and human growth, even his growth

- 1 Forsyth later defines this: "And by a compendious moral act I mean a prevenient act including in principle all those moral sacrifices and victories which worked it out in an actual historic life." The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 308.

Mackintosh states: "It would seem that the self-imposition of limits by Divine love must be conceived of as a great supra-temporal act by which, in the almightiness of grace, the Son chose to pass into human life. An infinitely pregnant act; for in truth it involved all the conflict, renunciation, and achievement of the life to which it was the prelude." The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 482.

- 2 The Person and Place, p. 308.

"...his growth was growth in what he was, and not simply to what he might be" Ibid. p. 342.

"He became what he was, and not merely what it was in him possible to be." Ibid. p. 311.

Mackintosh is even more explicit. "It may be said that such a conception of 'potentiality' means in strictness that the human Jesus became God by slow degrees; but the objection cannot, I think, be made good. This is no case of mere man rising at last to Divine honours; throughout the Person in view is One whose life is continuous with the life of God, in whom, as an infinite fountain, there exists eternally all that Jesus is to grow to. What Christ is by potency, with a potentiality based in His personal uniqueness. God is actually for ever. Moreover, the willed latency to which the properties of absolute Godhead are reduced in the life of earthly change and shadow is destined to be replaced, through moral triumph, by the fulness of life dwelling in the exalted Lord. From beginning to end there is no breach of personal continuity nor any ascent of bare manhood to a greatness it has neither right to hold nor power to wield."

H.R. Mackintosh, The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 479.

in the consciousness of what he was, we shall be most careful to note that any growth in his sense of Godhead was not the growth or acquisition of that Godhead itself."¹ "What is of Godhead does not grow; it is from Eternity to Eternity... Growth belongs only to corporeal personality; and in his incarnation the Son of God did not become for the first time personal but only corporeally personal, personal under the limited conditions which involve growth."² By this position Forsyth endeavours to affirm the reality of Christ's human growth and yet to preserve the integrity of His potential Godhead.

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 353.

2 Ibid., p. 284. This position is an advance from the position taken in Forsyth's earlier work, Religion in Recent Art, pp. 221-222: "Not even God could create a character full blown. It is producible by the soul's moral conflict alone. And the great crowning act of a divine character must be all of a piece with the process which raised the character... His complete salvation of the world from sin was effected by the completeness of His own personal conquest of it, His own victory over it in an actual passion of experience, and His own entire harmony with the will of God through the deepening history of His spirit's career...."

"The work of redemption was the work which made Christ Christ.... It was the continuous, expanding, and complete conquest over sin in a universal soul. And it was performed under the moral conditions of a human conscience, and of that spiritual evolution which, being a law of God's own being, was Christ's native law.... The cross is the clearest expression of the law of moral growth...."

The question which Forsyth then faces is, this: would not such a complete kenosis and self-identification with man involve a personal experience of man's sin? Forsyth gives two reasons why this is not so. First, Christ potuit non peccare. The distinction between physical and moral omnipotence upon which this argument rests is similar to Gore's argument.¹ Christ could sin, but He "simply could not"² - for He was human: "What is truly human is not sin, but the power to be tempted to sin.... Because Christ was true man he could be truly tempted; because he was true God he could not truly sin; but he was not less true man for that."³ This sinlessness is based upon moral freedom, a perfect human response to God's love: "He could be tempted because he loved; he could not sin because he loved so deeply, widely, infinitely, holily, because it was God he loved - God more than man."⁴ Second, Forsyth argues for an even more basic reason for Christ's sinlessness. "The potuit non peccare rests (but in no fated or mechanical way) on the non potuit peccare."

1 See Gore, pp. 122-123.

2 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 301. The phrase "simply could not" denotes the moral imperative in contrast to the metaphysical possibility of the first "could".

3 Ibid., p. 302.

4 Ibid., p. 303.

The ground of his inability to sin did not lie in the immunity, and almost necessity, of a nature or rank, but in the moral entail, the moral reverberation, of his great, initial, and inclusive act eternal in the heavens. His renunciations on earth had behind them all the power of that compendious renunciation by which he came to earth; even as his earthly acts of individual forgiveness, before he came to the universal forgiveness of calvary, had behind them that cross which he took up when the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world."¹ But what of His own moral conflict if He truly non potuit peccare? "Yet to his own experience the moral conflict was entirely real, because his self-emptying included an oblivion of that impossibility of sin. As consciousness arose he was unwittingly protected from those deflections incident to inexperience which would have damaged his moral judgement and development when maturity came."²

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 341.

2 Ibid., p. 311.

Macintosh concurs: "But while His assurance of victory can never have been mechanical, or such as to dispense Him from vigilance, or effort, or seasons of depression, it was none the less real and commanding. There is no reason why His consciousness of unique intimacy with the Father, and of the crucial importance of His mission, should not have imparted to Jesus, in each temptation, a firmly-based confidence of victory, though He knew not in advance how or how soon the final triumph would be vouch-safed." The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 481.

The *Kenosis* of Christ was that act by which the Son of God became man. As man He grew in wisdom and strength and regained the position He had had originally. "The diminuendo of the Kenosis went on parallel with the crescendo of a vaster Plerosis."¹ Forsyth provides his own summary of the Kenotic position in terms of Christ's intelligence: "By his own will God in Christ reduced his intelligence from being actual to being potential, within the kingdom of power or nature; while from that potentiality, as Christ grew in grace, it developed and regained actual omniscience by living it back, by the moral way of the kingdom of Grace, till he left the world behind, to be determined as the Son of God in power."²

P.T. Forsyth's Kenotic Theory makes several new and important contributions to Kenotic Christology. First, he makes an entirely new approach to the whole problem of Christological thinking. He does not begin scientifically, as did the other Kenoticists, using Reason as the sole ground and methodology for his theory; but rather he begins from within the faith with the personal experience of redemption. There is no way in which Reason, per se, can reach this point of departure, yet it is the only place one can start if one is truly to understand the person of Christ. To

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 311.

2 Ibid., p. 316.

read through the Gospel of St. Mark, getting in one picture the whole sweep of Christ's life, is one thing; but to read through the Gospel of St. Mark with the risen Christ authenticating Himself as the Jesus of history is quite another experience. Forsyth starts from the latter position, which is more than just a starting point; it is the existential-complex of salvation, which includes both beginning and end. Undoubtedly other Kenotic writers have assumed this fact of faith, but none of them has ever understood or utilized the inherent potentialities of such a position.

A second contribution of Forsyth's theory is its return from the Hellenic to the Hebraic idea of Divine Immutability, an emphasis upon "the changelessness of Divine holiness, the stability and utter steadfastness of God's righteous, saving purpose."¹ Stated positively, God is capable of anything which His love demands. Under these conditions Forsyth is able to assert without difficulty 'Infinitum capax finiti'² which the rigidity of the Hellenic pattern would not permit. As Principal Cocks points out, "This Divine self-adjustment includes that self-retraction of God whereby His attributes pass from the mode of actuality to that of potentiality. So far from such a Kenosis being a surrender of deity, it is in fact a demonstration of it."³

1 Above, p. 180, fn. 2.

2 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 309.

3 Cocks, Op Cit., p. 198.

A third contribution is Forsyth's emphasis upon the centrality of God, and not man, in creation. Even at the heart of the Son's motive for saving man stands God: "for God's sake more than for man's¹, for the love of the Holy more even than of the sinner..."² This is not to treat man as a means rather than an end in himself but is to recognise God's true place in His creation. Surely this is the same truth which inspired the psalmist to write: 'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned...'³ Man is rooted in God and only has meaning in so far as he exists for God; therefore, it is not too bold or too humiliating to admit that even man's redemption is accomplished to the glory of God.

1 There is some question about the exclusiveness of the phrase "more than". Perhaps 'as well as' might prove more adequate to express both sides of the truth of atonement. "To the age-old question, 'Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him?' we have the answer, 'A thing of price is a man, because for him Christ died.'" E.P. Dickie, God Is Light, p. 73.

2 Above, p. 170.

3 Psalm 51:4^a.

A fourth contribution is Forsyth's insistence on Christ's uniqueness. Other Kenoticists have found only difficulty in trying to establish possible grounds for the Incarnation, e.g. 'man was created in the Image of God; therefore the Logos can become man.' But Forsyth is able to escape all the ensuing difficulties concerning degree and kind of Incarnation by maintaining that the Incarnation is a new act of God's self-identification with the world. To state otherwise would be to limit God needlessly and wrongly. Forsyth is right in insisting that God, who is bound only by His own holiness, who could (were it necessary) 'raise up children of Abraham from the very stones', is able to establish a new relationship between Himself and His creation without following a pre-existent pattern. In this way Forsyth can insist on Christ's uniqueness and conformity at once, i.e. Christ is truly, yet newly, man.

A fifth contribution is one of silence. Forsyth does not attempt to describe the act of *κένωσις*. As stated earlier,¹ Forsyth feels that "there is something presumptuous in certain kenotic efforts to body forth just what the Son must have gone through

¹ Above, p. 174.

in such an experience."¹ By maintaining silence on this point, Forsyth is able to avoid what amounts to sheer speculation about the mysterious acts of the Divine.² And, because Forsyth is proceeding from the experiential fact of redemption, there is a certain necessary priority of interest which postpones any such speculation: "When we are not so much questioning the fact as discussing the manner of it - not the what but the how - it is a matter of theological science ~~not~~ ^{not} of religious faith. And the science of it can wait, but the religion of it cannot."³ This argument from silence is likewise evident in Forsyth's description of the fact (not act) of Incarnation.⁴

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- 1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 320. "Alle Theorien, die wir armseligen Menschen von der 'Menschwerdung Gottes' uns machen, sind vermessen; und die vermessenste von allen ist, weil sie das Innerste des menschwerdenden Logos glaubt beschreiben zu können, die moderne Kenosis-Lehre. F. Hoofs, Wer War Jesus Christus, pp. 212-213.
- 2 "It is right and proper to guard ourselves against that presumption which would 'find out the Almighty unto perfection'." E.P. Dickie, God Is Light, p. 84.
- 3 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 294.
- 4 "After all, in postulating a supramundane act of the Deity we can only discern or judge of its reality through our apprehension of its effects in our world. Of its direct conditions or results within the supramundane or heavenly sphere itself we are necessarily ignorant; and it may well be that any precision of logic based on the application of spatio-temporal categories to the heavenly sphere will only lead conjecture astray." Quick, Doctrines of the Creed, p. 137.

He gives three descriptions which he does not systematically co-ordinate, yet claims they are true simultaneously.¹ They are all different aspects of a complex which is God's grace. In such a case no over-all, exact picture is possible.

A sixth contribution which Forsyth makes concerns the person of the Incarnate Christ. Forsyth is able to state that the Son, after *Κένωσις*, still retains His Sonship unimpaired. This is not possible because of any dualism as Thomassius devised or Gore intimated; it is possible because Forsyth's modal interpretation permits him to speak of the actual becoming potential. This view he supports by his unwillingness to separate the attributes of God. To Forsyth, the attributes are not individual qualities which may be separated from the person of God; they are God in His self-expression. Therefore, wherever God is, so too are the 'attributes'. We know that 'God was in Christ' through our own experience; it follows then that, somehow, all of God's attributes must likewise be 'in Christ'. The only way that this is possible is for them to be potentially there, accommodated to the new

¹ Above, pp. 7-10.

state of Incarnation.¹ In this way Forsyth can logically maintain the integrity of the Son throughout the Incarnation, without denying His manhood.

A seventh contribution is one which W.L. Bradley makes: "One of the most valuable aspects of the kenotic theory is its inclusiveness: not only is Christ associated with the moral realm, but with the physical as well. His kenosis is both spiritual and physical. Thus the danger of an abstract mysticism is avoided and the unity of nature and spirit is guaranteed."²

Despite the great number of contributions which Forsyth has made, there are likewise a large number of criticisms which must be made within the framework of his theory.³ But Forsyth himself is aware of this: "I am aware of the kind of objection raised to the kenotic theory. Many difficulties arise readily in

1 By such an argument Forsyth is able to escape from the criticism Bruce makes of the theory of Reformed theologian Ebrard: "Unconscious, unavailable power is a euphemism for impotence; and unconscious, unavailable knowledge a euphemism for ignorance." But he cannot escape, however, the criticism brought by Pringle-Pattison against Tyndall's notorious Belfast address of 1874: "'Potentiality' is perhaps the most slippery term in the whole vocabulary of philosophy." Pringle-Pattison, The Idea of God, p. 106.

2 Bradley, Op. Cit., p. 203.

3 Because Forsyth has not constructed a closed systematic theory, all of the criticisms of his position can be considered within the framework of his system.

one's own mind. It is a choice of difficulties."¹ First, one must object to Forsyth's exclusion of a metaphysical discipline in his Theory:² "Because we can know Christ only through His redeeming action upon us, we may speculate about His person only in the moral category, and never in the metaphysical."³ Yet this can hardly be the case. It is obvious throughout the theory that the Son's kenosis is both spiritual and physical, and the moment that Forsyth admits that Christ is flesh (σάρξ), he is inevitably involved with a metaphysic. The redemptive experience which one has is not communion with the divine Logos but with the risen Christ, not with a Spirit merely but with Him who likewise identifies Himself as Jesus of whom the Gospels speak. Thus to know Christ through redemption is to be aware of his physical life on earth. This means a metaphysic of ethic; but it equally means a metaphysic of substance.

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 294.

2 Above, p. 164.

J.S. Lawton states that in Forsyth's theory "... logical and metaphysical objections to the theory are met with stern dismissal, since his theory would appear to him the only reasonable interpretation of the facts of revelation and redemption." (Lawton, Op. Cit., p. 157).

3 Bradley, Op. Cit., p. 201.

Forsyth looking to the person of Jesus Christ cannot escape the dual claim the two names imply. To say "God is God not physically but morally, not by power but by love..."¹ is to be arbitrarily one-sided in approaching a complex situation.

Second, there is an ambiguity in Forsyth's treatment of Christ's self-consciousness. On the one hand he supports the view that Christ was self-conscious of His mission and place: "Christ's sense of finality we must recognise; which is his faith, however implicit, in his own Godhead. We must acknowledge his sense of his own finality in the last moral issue of the world, the supreme human issue, the issue between God and man, life and death. He knew he was decisive in that issue. And who could be final or decisive there but God?...Must he not have known himself for the incarnation of the Eternal saving Will of God, the Eternal agent of the Eternal purpose?"² In a later passage he states, "But if He (God) parted with His self-consciousness as infinite would it not come as near to suicide as

¹ Above, p. 171.

² Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, pp. 92-94.

infinite could?"¹ On the other hand, if these points be granted, could Christ be truly called human? Such a self-consciousness would certainly deny Forsyth the right to say that Christ had given up the conditions of God for the conditions of man.² It would seem that the state which Forsyth has described is neither divine nor human but somewhere in between. In fact, were it not for his directness in expressing Christ's humanity ("His identity with man lay in no mere continuity of substance, nor even in participating in personality, but in his assumption of man's conditions of personality..."³), Forsyth's theory might be termed docetic. There is a tendency to regard God's presence on earth as a divine manifestation rather than an Incarnation.

Third, Forsyth states, "As God, the son in his freedom would have a Kenotic power over Himself corresponding to the infinite power of self-determination

1 Above, p. 173. Though this statement, admittedly, refers specifically to God, it must likewise be applicable to Christ, for "the fulness of the Son's Godhead was still the essence of Christ. That Godhead lost nothing in the saving act." (Above, p. 179f.)

2 Above, p. 183.

3. Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 352.

which belongs to deity..."¹ Again, "God sent; the Son came."² Forsyth is insistent upon the fact that it was the Son who became man and dwelt among us. The distinction between Father and Son "must not be imperilled."³ But if this be the case, Forsyth is as guilty as the earlier Kenoticists of falsely separating the persons of the Trinity.⁴ If it be argued that the Godhead is potential in the Incarnation, that "He could not have emptied Himself but for His Godhead,"⁵ these qualifications still do not satisfy the demands of unity. To say that one person of the Godhead possesses the Godhead in a self-retracted way and that at the same time the other two persons possess the Godhead in its fulness, is as impossible to think

1 Above, p. 180.

2 Above, p. 178.

3 Ibid.

4 "I do not mean to identify myself with any of the later technical theories usually known as 'kenotic'. Many of them seem either to imply an actual demission (so to speak) of Godhead which is unintelligible, or to imply that the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, prior to and independently of the Incarnation, is to be regarded as possessing knowledge and reason of His own distinct from that of the Father, a doctrine which is happily as unorthodox as it is irrational." Hastings Rashdall, Doctrine and Development, p. 36 fn.

5 Above, p. 180.

as to state clearly; and it is definitely not what is meant by the phrase opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa. And, if it be objected that this is a highly scientific, abstruse argument with which Forsyth would not have concerned himself, it must be replied that Forsyth is forced to consider it; for he is the one who introduced the ideas of "potentiality" and "self-retraction", which are necessarily scientific in part.¹

Fourth, Forsyth's concept of Christ's growth needs to be questioned. Forsyth does argue for real growth: "We should take more seriously the growth of Jesus. ...His natural consciousness grew, and the content of it grew, as he grew from child to man, and came to know the world. His spiritual consciousness, his sense of sonship, also grew, as he settled the conflicts that beset him about his Messiahship."² However, Forsyth is not content to trust all development solely to environment: "The history of Christ's growth is then a history of moral

¹ Such a position also involves Forsyth in the problem of the Cosmic Functions of the Logos; but since this has been examined earlier (Fairbairn, pp. 37-38), the arguments need not be repeated.

² Above, pp. 184.

redintegration, the history of his recovery, by gradual moral conquest, of the mode of being from which, by a tremendous moral act, he came."¹ But Forsyth adds to this, "amid all that we recognise in him of human conditions and human growth...we shall be most careful to note that any growth in his sense of Godhead was not the growth or acquisition of that Godhead itself."² Surely the above statements destroy any real concept of growth. If Christ's life was a "winning back"³ of what was already his, if he became what he already was,⁴ if the essence of His person was His Godhead⁵ which by definition cannot possibly grow, there can be no real growth in Christ. His life would be absolutely determined and would have to be considered a disciplined and prefigured evolutionary process and not true development and maturation. Again, such a concept of growth means ultimately that the Incarnation was not real; the Son did not really become man but

1 Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 308 (Above, p.181) my italics.

2 Above, pp. 185-186 my italics.

3 Above, p. 185.

4 Above, p. 185, fn. 2.

5 Above, p. 179.

merely cloaked Himself in man's form. Forsyth, in general, does not hold to this position, but his doctrine of Christ's growth would demand it.¹

Fifth, some mention should be made of Forsyth's doctrine of Christ's sinlessness. It is a rather interesting commentary upon Forsyth's theory that at this point he feels it is necessary to support his metaphysic of ethic by a metaphysic of being - a practice which he has earlier dismissed.² Although he has secured Christ's sinlessness in an ethical way by maintaining that Christ, as perfect and free man, potuit non peccare,³ he goes on to say that "the potuit non peccare rests... on the non potuit peccare."⁴ This position involves Forsyth in three undesirable consequences: a) Such a position means a denial of a true Incarnation. If man potuit peccare and Christ non potuit peccare, even the fact that potuit non peccare can be said of each, cannot reconcile the

1 The above concept of Christ's growth also jeopardizes the catholic doctrine of Christ's permanent manhood - 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and for ever' (Heb. 13:8). If Christ, as Forsyth suggests, was becoming what He already was, and if "it was not till he died that he possessed his whole soul, came to his own, entered on all he really was, was exalted to his true heaven..." (Forsyth, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, pp. 121-122), then it is likewise right to assert that Christ's manhood was superseded by his regaining the state of Eternal Divine Logos.

2 Above, p. 164.

3 Above, p. 187.

4 Ibid.

metaphysical and ethical difference; and only one such difference is necessary to negate the validity of the Incarnation. b) When man, the sinner, recognises that sin, despite temptation, is an impossibility for Christ, Christ ceases to be, by his mere presence on earth at one period of time, paradigm and judge. Christ no longer has the right to say, 'Follow me'. c) To maintain, as Forsyth does, that Christ was "unwittingly protected"¹ from the fact of His inability to sin, does not solve the ethical problem for the sinner even if it does for Christ. It merely emphasises the separation in the Trinity, and leads one to a position in which God appears to be deceiving Himself.

Sixth, Forsyth's harsh judgement of Chalcedon is not altogether warranted: "The formula of the union of two natures in one person is essentially a metaphysical formula...more or less archaic for the modern mind."² "Its categories were too elemental and physical."³ In place of this formula, Forsyth wishes to submit a metaphysic of ethic,⁴ yet such a substitution is open to the same kind of criticism: the categories become

1 Above, p. 188.

2 Above, p. 168.

3 Above, p. 169.

4 Ibid.

too spiritual and ethical and neglect the physical man Jesus Christ.¹ In all fairness one must admit that Forsyth has offered some brilliant insights into the spiritual and ethical nature of the Incarnation, but not to the exclusion of Chalcedon. It would be wiser to view Forsyth's contribution as an addition to, rather than a negation of, the Chalcedonian formula.

Seventh, Forsyth is not altogether convincing in his argument for the necessity of a kenotic explanation of the Incarnation. "If there was a personal pre-existence in the case of Christ it does not seem possible to adjust it to the historic Jesus without some doctrine of Kenosis. We face in Christ a Godhead self-reduced but real, whose infinite power took effect in self-humiliation, whose strength was perfected in weakness, who consented not to know with an ignorance divinely wise, and who emptied himself in virtue of his divine fulness."² These five paradoxical statements concerning the nature of the Incarnation, upon which Forsyth claims the necessity of *Kenosis*, seem to support equally well (and with less distortion) the Chalcedonian formula. In fact the statements cease to be contradictory and become

¹ Above, p. 196.

² Above, p. 167.

paradoxical only because of the mysterious unity of the two natures in the one Person. If one insists, as the Kenoticists do, upon predicating both assertions of one self-conscious being, then the various problems of violation to one nature or the other arise, and the Kenoticist is forced to explain the mystery of God - which he cannot do. Even Forsyth who refuses, understandably, to describe the act of God's *Kenosis*, cannot escape from having to explain and describe the results of that act, i.e. God's presence in Christ, the nature of the Trinity during the Incarnation, and God's new relation to man as Man; and the Kenotic Theory only makes his task more difficult.

To finish at this point would be premature. It is only right to note that underlying Forsyth's adoption of the Kenotic Theory is his deep religious interest in the amazing humiliation of Christ and not his interest in an infallible Christology. "It is his religious sensitiveness that makes Forsyth reach out to Kenosis."¹ In this respect, Forsyth can be considered the transition figure in the history of the Kenotic Theory. It is from this point onward

¹ This statement was made to me by Principal Charles S. Duthie in a private interview.

that the doctrine of Kenosis has been effectively used,¹ not as the metaphysical basis for a Christology but as one of the necessary metaphors needed to express the Incarnation of God, Jesus Christ, 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief'.

1 See the Summary Statement.

CHAPTER VI

AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS II: 5-8.

An Exegetical Study of
Philippians 2:5-8

Although many passages and texts have been introduced in support of the Kenotic Theory of the Incarnation, one text in particular has become the locus classicus for the Theory. Whatever else is brought to corroborate the Theory,¹ this passage - Philippians 2:5-8 - always stands at the heart of such support; in fact, it is from verse seven (ΕΧΥΤΟΝ ΕΚΕΥΝΓΕΝ) that the theory derives its name. The passage, as J.S. Lawton points out, has become "a focal point in the controversy"² and therefore must be examined critically to ascertain what evidence and support is available. The following exegesis, however, will not be a complete philological analysis of the passage³ but will try to discover to what extent important and current New Testament

1 II, Corinthians 8:9 and St. John's Gospel 1:14 (ΕΧΕΥΕΤΟ) deserve particular mention.

2 Lawton, Conflict In Christology, p. 123.

3 "The diversity of opinion prevailing among interpreters in regard to the meaning of the principal passage bearing on the subject of Christ's humiliation - that, namely, in the second chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Philippians - is enough to fill the student with despair, and to afflict him with intellectual paralysis." Bruce, Humiliation of Christ, p. 8.

scholarship can support or deny the arguments of Kenotic Christology. But, before the actual exegetical study of the passage, some mention of the context of Paul's letter must be made. "The Apostle's purpose", states E.H. Gifford,¹ "is happily too clear to be obscured by any diversity of interpretation. St. Paul has been encouraging his beloved converts at Philippi to 'stand fast in one spirit, with one soul, striving for the faith of the Gospel'. He entreats them to make his joy in them complete by adding to their faith and courage the crowning graces of humility and self-denying love. He pleads with them by every motive of Christian fellowship, and not least by their personal affection for himself, and their sympathy with his sufferings in behalf of Christ, to 'be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind'. 'Let nothing', he says, 'be done through strife and vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.'

"These earnest and loving entreaties the Apostle proceeds to enforce by setting forth our

¹ E.H. Gifford, The Incarnation, pp. 4-5.

Blessed Lord Himself as the supreme example of humility, self-sacrifice, and love; and he is thus led on to speak of those deepest and holiest mysteries of the Christian Faith, the Incarnation of the Son of God, His voluntary self-abasement, His obedience 'even unto death, yea, the death of the Cross'."

In particular, four critical phrases from verses 6-7 will be discussed.

Philippians 2:5ff;

τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν
Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων
οὐκ ἄρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ,
ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου
λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος.¹

The first critical point to be discussed is the word ὃς in verse 6: to whom does it refer, the Logos incarnate or the Logos before incarnation? Bruce outlines the historical theological positions which seem to govern interpretation of the word:

1 "Whether Paul is using an already existing hymn [as E. Lohmeyer suggests] or not does not really matter: we have the passage as one of the key points of the Apostle's theology." R.S. Franks, The Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 28.

"The old orthodox Lutherans almost as a matter of course reply, 'The subject concerning whom the affirmation is made is the Logos incarnate (en-sarkos), the man Christ Jesus; the meaning of the apostle being, that the man Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, and possessing as man divine attributes, did nevertheless, while on earth, make little or no use of these attributes; but in effect emptied Himself of them, and assumed servile form, and was in fashion and habit as other men.' The old Reformed theologians, on the other hand, after the example of the Church Fathers, with equal unanimity reply, 'The subject of whom Paul speaks is the Logos before incarnation (asarkos), the Son of God personally pre-existent before He became man; and the sense is, that He being in the form of God, subsisting as a divine being before the incarnation, emptied Himself, by being made in the likeness of man, and taking upon Him the form of a servant.' Among modern theologians, the advocates of the kenosis, in the sense of a metaphysical self-exinanition of the Logos, whether belonging to the Lutheran or to the Reformed confession, side with the Fathers and with the old Reformed dogmatists."¹

¹ Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ, p. 9-10.

These findings are given support by the following scholars who have specifically studied the passage: H.A.W. Meyer,¹ M.R. Vincent,² J.B. Lightfoot,³ J.H. Michael,⁴ H.A.A. Kennedy,⁵ E. Lohmeyer,⁶ and R. Rainy.⁷ E.H. Gifford⁸ likewise agrees that

ὁς is subject of both states but rests his argument upon the word ὑπάρχων in the imperfect tense. This usage points to an indefinite continuance of being. It is evident, too, from the nature of the Kenotic Theory that Kenoticists are committed to consider ὁς as a dual subject, for if Christ were not pre-existent the Theory could not even be stated.

The kenoticists specifically studied in this thesis support the above opinion. Fairbairn enters into no long exegetical discussion of the passage

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- 1 Meyer, Commentary on the New Testament, Philippians and Colossians, pp. 77-78.
 - 2 M.R. Vincent, The International Critical Commentary, The Epistles to the Philippians and to Philemon, p. 57.
 - 3 Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, p. 110.
 - 4 Michael, The Moffatt New Testament Commentary, The Epistle to the Philippians, pp. 82-84.
 - 5 Kennedy, The Expositor's Greek Testament, The Epistle to the Philippians, p. 435.
 - 6 Lohmeyer, Kyrios Jesus, p. 5, fn. 2.
 - 7 Rainy, The Expositor's Bible, The Epistle to the Philippians, p. 113.
 - 8 Gifford, The Incarnation, pp. 6-9.

but refers with apparent approbation¹ to Meyer whose views are stated above. Thomasius, however, does state that not only $\delta\varsigma$ but also the whole context of the passage refers to Christ's pre-existence: "Nicht also an der Bestimmung des Subjekts sondern an dem ganzen Inhalt des Satzes entscheidet sich jene Frage."² Gore likewise assumes Christ's pre-existence and refers to Lightfoot and Bruce particularly.³ Forrest assumes without question the divinity of Christ.⁴ Forsyth does not mention the Philippian passage specifically, yet it is obvious that he is assuming that his readers will know where he obtained the word $\kappa\epsilon\upsilon\omega\varsigma\iota\varsigma$ and to whom it refers. Mackintosh, who represents the same "type" of Kenotic Theory is more explicit: "Christ...came into our world from a previous state of Divine existence."⁵ From these statements and

1 Fairbairn, Christ in Modern Theology, p. 309, fn.1.

2 Thomasius, Christi Person und Werk, Bk. II, p. 149.

3 Gore, Dissertations, Op. Cit., pp. 88-89.

4 Forrest, The Authority of Christ, p. 98.

5 Mackintosh, The Person of Jesus Christ, p. 66.

from the above views of the New Testament scholars, it can be safely asserted that thus far there is no point of disagreement.

The second, and one of the most important phrases to be considered, is *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ*. There are nearly as many opinions about the meaning of *μορφή* as there are commentators, yet some broad lines of agreement can be drawn. "*Μορφή* does not mean the same thing as *οὐσία* or *φύσις*. Even the old Reformed theologian Zanchius, while following the patristic tradition in the interpretation of the word, acknowledges the distinguishableness of the terms, and quotes with approbation a passage from a contemporary, Danseus, in which they are very clearly distinguished, *οὐσία* being defined as denoting the naked essence, *φύσις* as the *οὐσία* clothed with its essential properties, and *μορφή* as adding to the essential and natural properties of the essence, other accidents which follow the true nature of a thing, and by which, as features and colours, *οὐσία* and *φύσις* are shaped and depicted.¹ Thus understood, *μορφή* presupposes *οὐσία* and *φύσις*, and yet is

¹ H.C.G. Moule, *Philippian Studies*, p. 92, fn. 3.
 "*Μορφή* is reality in manifestation."

separable from them; it cannot exist without them. The Son of God, subsisting in the form of God, must have possessed divine οὐσία and divine φύσις; but it is conceivable that retaining the οὐσία and the φύσις, He might part with the μορφή. And in point of fact, such a parting for a season with the μορφή seems clearly taught in this place. The apostle conceives of the Incarnation as an exchange of divine form for the human form of existence. In what the thing parted with precisely consists, and what the dogmatic import of the exchange may be, are points open to debate. As to the former, we must be content, meantime, with the general statement that the thing renounced was not divine essence, or anything belonging essentially to the divine nature. The Logos remained what He was in these respects when He became what He was not; equal to God in nature (ἴσος θεῷ), while ceasing for a season to be His equal in state (ἴσα θεῷ)."¹ Meyer

¹ Bruce, Op. Cit., pp. 19-20. Some mention should be made of the phrase to which Bruce has referred: τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ Meyer (pp. 87-88), Bruce (p. 18), Vincent (pp. 58-59), and Lightfoot (pp. 111-112) feel that τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ simply repeats the idea expressed by ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων Kennedy (pp. 436-437), Michael (p. 89), and Lohmeyer (pp. 27-29) do not feel that the two phrases can be equated and maintain that τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ is that which is awarded to Christ for His obedience. But no matter which opinion is accepted, both recognize the original divinity of Christ and thus do not substantially affect the argument for or against the Kenotic Theory.

is in agreement with Bruce on the above - "Μορφή
 ...is neither equivalent to φύσις or οὐσία
 ...nor to status.... But μορφή Θεοῦ presupposes
 the divine φύσις ..."¹ - but disagrees with
 Bruce by asserting that μορφή is an appropriate
 concrete expression for the divine δόξα ."²

This opinion Meyer supports by quoting Hebrews 1:3
 (predicated of the pre-existent Christ): ἀπαύγασμα
 τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ
 which he claims gives an "exhaustive explanation"³
 of μορφή Θεοῦ. Vincent believes that
 "Μορφή" here means that expression of being
 which is identified with the essential nature and
 character of God, and which reveals it."⁴ But
 Vincent does not intend this to convey a metaphysical
 or philosophical interpretation of the passage -
 "The impulse to the higher flight is emotional
 rather than philosophical."⁵ "The application of
 the term μορφή to God was principally a

1 Meyer, Op. Cit., p. 80.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Vincent, Op. Cit., pp. 57-58.

5 Ibid., p. 79.

reflection of its application to a bondservant. Christ's humiliation was the dominant thought in Paul's mind, and the **μορφή** of a bondservant therefore came first in the order of thought. The idea of some embodiment of the divine personality was not altogether absent from his mind, but **μορφή Θεοῦ** was chiefly a rhetorical antithesis to **μορφή δούλου**.¹ Vincent is likewise opposed to Meyer's use of **δόξα** : "**μορφή** , however, applied to God is not to be identified with **δόξα** **Δόξα** attaches to Deity; **μορφή** is identified with the inmost being of Deity. **Δόξα** is and must be included in **μορφή Θεοῦ**, but **δόξα** is not **μορφή** ." ² Lightfoot is equally specific; he agrees with Bruce about **οὐσία** but believes **μορφή** refers to God's attributes: "Though **μορφή** is not the same as **φύσις** or **οὐσία** yet the possession of the **μορφή** involves participation in the **οὐσία** also: for **μορφή** implies not the external accidents but the essential attributes.... Similar also is the term which St. John has adopted to express this truth,

1 Vincent, Op. Cit., pp. 79-80.

2 Ibid., pp. 80-81.

ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ.¹

H.A.A. Kennedy refuses to contrast *μορφή*, *οὐσία*, and *φύσις*, for he maintains that *μορφή* in its present context is too general a term for such refined comparisons.² "It is far more probable that Paul

× uses *μορφ.* here 'in a loose, popular sense, as we use "nature"' (Guardian, Jan. 1, 1896).

He means, of course, in the strictest sense that the pre-existing Christ was Divine. For *μ.* always signifies a form which truly and fully expresses the being which underlies it. But in trying to reach a conception of the pre-existing nature of his Lord, he is content to think of Him as the *εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ* (Col. 1:15), as sharing in that *δόξα* ...which is the manifestation of the Divine nature (cf. John 17:5, Heb. 1:3), as possessing, that is to say, the same kind of existence as God possesses, without indulging in speculations on the metaphysical relationship of the Son to the Father."³ Michael cites both

1 Lightfoot, *Op. Cit.*, p. 110. This is a summary statement which is supported by a detailed argument on pp. 127-133. R.J. Cooke, *The Incarnation and Recent Criticism*, quotes Ellicott, Alford, and Gwynn in agreement with Lightfoot at this point. pp. 202-203.

2 Kennedy, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 435-436.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 436.

Lightfoot and Kennedy and agrees with the general approach of the latter, though he nowhere supports the idea of *μορφή* as equivalent to *δόξα*. Lohmeyer also agrees with the equating of *μορφή* and "nature" - "Denn 'Gestalt' kann, wie schon hervorgehoben, nicht das Element bezeichnen, 'in dem' ein Wesen existiert oder das Substrat, aus dem ein Bestimmtes sich formt; sie ist selbst ein Bestimmtes. Und dennoch fordert die Präposition 'in' die gleichsam gestaltlose, aber alle Möglichkeiten einer Gestalt in sich bergende Unbestimmtheit eines Elementes. So war es ein richtiges Gefühl, dass alte Kommentatoren in dem Worte von der Gestalt den Begriff der göttlichen 'Natur' fanden."¹ Rainy likewise agrees that "...the expression [form] should not be understood to point to anything superficial, accidental, superimposed. No doubt it is an expression which describes the Being by adverting to the attributes which, as it were, He wore, or was clothed with. But the word carries us especially to those attributes of the thing described which are characteristic; by which it is permanently distinguished to the eye or to the mind; which

¹ Lohmeyer, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 18-19.

denote its true nature because they rise out of that nature; the attributes which, to our minds, express the essence."¹ Gifford offers the most uncompromising position of all the expositors: "For the interpretation of 'the form of God' it is sufficient to say that (1) it includes the whole nature and essence of Deity, and is inseparable from them, since they could have no actual existence without it; and (2) that it does not include in itself anything "accidental" or separable, such as particular modes of manifestation or conditions of glory and majesty which may at one time be attached to the 'form', at another separable from it. (3) The Son of God could not possibly divest Himself of 'the form of God' at His Incarnation without thereby ceasing to be God; so that in all interpretations which assume that 'the form of God' was laid aside when 'the form of a servant' was assumed, it is, in fact, however unintentionally and unconsciously, denied that Jesus Christ during His life on earth was really and truly God."²

As for the Kenoticists, Thomasius is in agreement with Meyer: "Entleert aber hat er sich der *μορφή Θεοῦ*, wie der Gegensatz *μορφή δούλου* beweist. Dass *μορφή* weder gleich

1 Rainy, The Expositor's Bible, "The Epistle to the Philippians", p. 114.

2 Gifford, The Incarnation, p. 19.

οὐσία oder φύσις, noch gleich status sei, sondern die forma, die Erscheinung, worin sich jemand darstellt, bezeichne, dürfen wir als gemeinsames Resultat der neueren Auslegung unserer Stellen betrachten; μορφή Θεοῦ ist daher, wie Meyer es ausdrückt, die Zustandsform, dem Wesen entsprechend und den Zustand darstellend, oder genauer, die dem Wesen Gottes entsprechende Herrlichkeitsgestalt, von der δόξα nur dadurch unterschieden, dass hier zugleich die Erscheinung dieser Herrlichkeit der Welt gegenüber mit einbegriffen sein wird, wie aus dem Gegensatz μορφή δούλου erhellt."¹ Gore tends to follow Bruce rather than Meyer: "Christ Jesus pre-existed, he [Paul] declares, in the form of God. The word 'form' transferred from physical shape to spiritual type, describes - as St. Paul uses it, alone or in composition, with uniform accuracy - the permanent characteristics of a thing."² "The question has been asked, Does St. Paul imply that Jesus Christ abandoned the μορφή Θεοῦ? I think all we can certainly say is that He is conceived to have emptied Himself of the divine mode of existence (μορφή), so far as was involved in His really entering upon the human mode of existence (μορφή). St. Paul does not use his terms with the exactness of a professional

¹ Thomasius, Op. Cit., Bk. II, p. 150.

² Gore, Dissertations, pp. 88-89.

logician or scholastic."¹ Forrest maintains that *μορφή Θεοῦ* must be understood in contrast to *μορφή δούλου* that the assumption of the latter, the servant's form of existence, implied the renunciation of its antithesis, the divine form of existence or divine *δόξα*. In that case the *μορφή Θεοῦ* usually regarded as essentially identical with *τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ* [see above fn. 1 p.215]. Nor is this meaning substantially altered even if as some hold *τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ* refers not to the equality with God which was Christ's by right and which He yielded up, but to the equality with God which would become His, as acknowledged Lord through the self-emptying of the Incarnation."² Mackintosh feels that *μορφή* describes a "quality" or existence: "Christ... came into our world from a previous state of Divine existence; in that estate He possessed self-conscious independent life, with a will that ruled itself; a will that might have been exerted in other modes, but actually was exerted in this mode of self-abnegation. It is asserted...that before He came as man Christ's life was Divine in quality; not merely like God, but participant in His essential attributes (*μορφή*)." ³ Thus far there is

1 Gore, *Dissertations*, p. 89, fn. 1. Gore then refers the reader to Bruce.

2 Forrest, *Op.Cit.*, p. 99.

3 Mackintosh, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 66-67.

agreement between commentators and Kenoticists -

μορφή does carry with it the idea of "essential nature" as opposed to **ὁμοίωμα** and **σχῆμα**.

The only point of marked disagreement concerns the equating of **μορφή** and **δόξα**. The majority

of scholars are against such an equation and cite, as Vincent, the fact that **δόξα** "attaches to

Deity."¹ In any event, those who do support the use of **δόξα** support their position by quoting

Hebrews 1:3 (predicated of Christ) as the definition

of **μορφή Θεοῦ ; ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ;**

but does not the **καὶ** separate by adding (as opposed to equating) the "glory" and the "stamp"? This

verse cannot be thought of as proof for **δόξα** as a totally inclusive definition of **μορφή**.

The third phrase to be considered is **ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν**. This is obviously the key phrase in

the whole passage. Lohmeyer's criticism is the most concise and most complete: "Die Bedeutung von

κενοῦν is zweifellos die von 'entleeren'; sie ruft das Bild eines Gefäßes wach, dessen Inhalt ausgeschüttet wird, so dass die Form erhalten bleibt.

Wollte man auch hier in strengem Sinne das Bild

¹ See above.

durchführen, so müsste ein Etwas angebbar sein, das in dieser Entleerung gewahrt bliebe, und dieses Etwas könnte nur die göttliche Gestalt sein, "in der" Christus ist. Aber gerade diese Gestalt wird abgetan. So wird hier zunächst bestätigt, dass der Begriff der Gestalt sich nicht mit dem "Äusseren" deckt, das selbst veränderlich ein unveränderliches Innere umschliesst; in ihm ist, was innen ist, auch aussen und, was aussen ist, auch innen. Die Gestalt ist das Wesen selbst. Dann kann auch das Wort **KEVOUV** nur im Sinne einer völligen Preisgabe, eines restlosen Sich opfern verstanden werden. Mit anderen Worten, es ist kein mythischer, sondern trotz oder auch gerade wegen der mythischen Erzählung ein rein ethischer Begriff. So verbindet die Sphäre des Göttlichen und Menschlichen nichts, was sich substanzartig erhält, sondern allein der Sinn der ethischen Tat. In aller "Verwandlung" lässt sich also nicht nach dem substantiellen Moment fragen, das in ihr beharrt. Es ist der tiefe Sinn dieses Ausdrucks, dass er diese Frage nicht kennt. Wohl sind die beiden Reiche von Göttlichem und Menschlichem substantiell geschieden; diese substantiale Scheidung ist auch unüberbrückbar. Was aber diese tiefste Kluft und was sie allein überwindet, ist die Reinheit des sittlichen Handelns. Doch diese Tat des Sich-opfern

geschieht durch eine göttliche Gestalt; so hat sie gerade in der Aufgabe ihrer selbst ein neues substantiales Dasein zu schaffen. Es ist die 'Knechtsgestalt'. So trägt diese auch eine eigentümliche Doppelheit an sich; weil die Tat ethische Setzung ist, deshalb ist es ein und derselbe, der vorher 'in göttlicher Gestalt war', jetzt 'Gestalt eines Knechtes' annimmt'. Weil dieses 'Annehmen' ein substantiales Anderssein schafft, deshalb ist es zugleich ein anderer. Es ist deutlich, wie auch hier der Typus des Denkens der gleiche ist wie in den iranischen Konzeptionen. So wird aber das 'Annehmen der Knechtsgestalt' für menschliche Augen zu einem unbegreiflichen Wunder, es ist eben deshalb das göttlich Notwendige und gleichsam Selbstverständliche. Darum webt um diese Gestalt eine eigentümliche Doppelheit. Denn dieser 'Knecht' ist um der Tat der Kenose willen ein anderer als er erscheint - aber dieses Erscheinen hat den vollen Sinn geschichtlicher Wirklichkeit - und er erscheint ein anderer als er ist. Sein Anderssein ist das göttliche Geheimnis seines menschlichen Daseins, es ist gleichsam in ihm verborgen."¹

Bruce's position is similar to that of Lohmeyer's, for it, too, emphasizes the ethical nature of the kenosis. However, Bruce feels that Paul's emphasis

¹ Lohmeyer, Op. Cit., pp. 34-35.

is twofold, not only what was created (the "Annehmen") but also what was emptied. "Ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν-

He emptied Himself - that was the first great act by which the mind of the Son of God was revealed.

Wherein did the *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ* consist?...The Apostle gives a twofold answer; one having reference to the pre-existent state, the other to the sphere of Christ's human history. With reference to the

former, the kenosis signified a firm determination not to hold fast and selfishly cling to equality of state with God. Thus I understand the words

οὐκ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ.

"The kenosis...is next represented positively, with reference to the historical existence, as consisting in the assumption of the form of a servant, and in being made in the likeness of man. Μορφὴν δούλου

λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος.

The ethical quality of Christ's human life is described in the former of these two clauses; the fact of His becoming man is referred to in the latter.... The order in which the two clauses are arranged is rhetorical rather than logical. That is placed first which is of most importance to

the purpose..."¹ Meyer's position completely supports that of Bruce.² Vincent likewise agrees with Bruce and Lohmeyer, but adds this comment: "ἐκὺτὸν ἐκένωσεν [is] not used or intended here in a metaphysical sense to define the limitations of Christ's incarnate state, but as a strong and graphic expression of the completeness of his self-renunciation. It includes all the details of humiliation which follow, and is defined by these."³ "The word [ἐκένωσεν] does not indicate a surrender of deity, nor a paralysis of deity, nor a change of personality, nor a break

1 Bruce, Op. Cit., p. 20.

"This passage brings before us the Incarnation of the Son of God as a voluntary act of self-emptying. It has been in every phrase and almost every word the battle ground of scholars, as though Paul were here giving definitions with the precision of dogmatics, and not in impassioned language presenting a sublime moral example for human imitation. 'Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus' might have warned the scholastic theologian off the ground." A.E. Garvie, Studies of Paul and His Gospel, p. 115. Also E. Digges La Touche, The Person of Christ in Modern Thought, p. 360.

2 Meyer, Op. Cit., pp. 89-90.

3 Vincent, Op. Cit., p. 59.

A.E. Garvie, Studies of Paul and His Gospel, p. 117.
J.F. Bethune-Baker, An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine, p. 296.

in the continuity of self-consciousness. Christ's consciousness of deity was not suspended during his earthly life. He knew that he came from God and went to God; that he had glory with the Father before the world was, and would receive it back. But he was made in all things like unto his brethren."¹ Lightfoot is in agreement generally with the above positions and adds this comment: "The emphatic position of *ἐκένω* points to the humiliation of our Lord as voluntary, self-imposed."² Kennedy also defends the above argument and lists Meyer and Bruce specifically as support.³ Michael, too, agrees: "Whatever may have been the exact meaning the Apostle attached to the words emptied himself, he goes on to tell that it was by taking the nature of a servant that Christ did empty himself."⁴ Michael also strongly rejects any

1 Vincent, Op. Cit., pp. 89-90.

2 Lightfoot, Op. Cit., p. 112. Also E.H. Gifford, Op. Cit., p. 37.

3 Kennedy, Op. Cit., p. 437.

4 Michael, Op. Cit., p. 91. Michael's opinion receives at least partial support from Wm. Bright: "It was solely with reference to and in the humanity that the 'Kenosis' operated. This is indicated by St. Paul's construction: 'He emptied Himself by taking on Him the form of a servant'; just as He further 'humbled Himself by becoming obedient, even unto death', etc. The act of 'self-emptying' and the act of 'self-humiliation' are dependent on, are measured by, the assumption of humanity and the endurance of the cross. They do not extend respectively beyond either. Thus the 'Kenosis' did not touch the Divine sphere in which our Lord continued to live and energise." Wm. Bright, Waymarks in Church History, p. 386.

possibility of a metaphysical interpretation of the passage: "It is evident that the present passage supplies but little foundation for the elaborate theories that are called 'kenotic'. Nor do these theories afford us much help in our endeavour to understand the person of our Lord."¹ Gifford, on the act of kenosis, quotes with approval the Synod of Antioch (A.D. 269) "[The Logos] emptied Himself from being on an equality with God..."² Rainy best sums up the position for the expositors: 'He emptied Himself.' "It seems most certain, on the one hand, that this cannot import that He who was with God and was God could renounce His own essential nature and cease to be Divine...."

"On the other hand, we are to beware of weakening unduly this great testimony. Certainly it fixes our thoughts on this, at least, that our Lord, by becoming man, had for His, truly for His, the experience of human limitation, human weakness and impoverishment, human dependence, human subjection, singularly contrasting with the glory and plenitude of the form of God."³

1 Michael, Op. Cit. p. 91. Also The Church Quarterly Review, Jan. 1899 quoting "A Charge" by Wm. Stubbs, Bp. of Oxford. p. 351. The Expository Times, Feb. 1949. A.W. Argyle, p. 137. Christologies Ancient and Modern, Wm. Sanday, p. 75.

2 Gifford, The Incarnation, pp. 37-38.

3 Rainy, The Expositor's Bible, "The Epistle to the Philippians", pp. 118-119.

At this point most of the Kenoticists are forced to part company with the commentators; for in order to state the Kenotic Theory, a literal and metaphysical interpretation of $\epsilon\chi\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu\ \epsilon\acute{\kappa}\epsilon\nu\omega\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ is necessary.

Thomasius states: "Den Akt, um den es sich hier handelt, bezeichnet der Apostel als ein $\epsilon\chi\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu\ \epsilon\acute{\kappa}\epsilon\nu\omega\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ d.h. sich entleeren, eines wirklichen Besitzes sich entaussern, so exspoliare." ¹ "Die $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ist die Vertauschung der einen Existenzform mit der andern; jener sich entleerend hat Christus dagegen letztere angenommen; sie ist also ein Akt freier Selbstverläugnung, der zu seinen beiden Momenten die Verzichtung auf die göttliche, ihm als Gotte zustehende Herrlichkeitsgestalt, und die Annahme der menschlich-beschränkten und bedingten Lebensgestalt hat." ²

Gore does not draw the lines of definition quite so sharply as Thomasius. To be sure, he does conceive of the kenosis in metaphysical terms - "For love of us He abjured the prerogatives of equality with God. By an act of deliberate self-abnegation, He so emptied Himself as to assume the permanent characteristics of the human or servile life." ³ But, the kenosis affirmed in the New Testament is not an absolute one but relative to the sphere and period of the

1 Thomasius, Op. Cit., p. 150.

2 Ibid., p. 151.

3 Gore, Dissertations, p. 89.

Incarnation.¹ Forrest realizes the difficulties of the passage and recognizes that Paul is not writing "with the technical exactness of a metaphysician."² The Philippian passage has meaning only in so far as it is supported by the whole of Scripture. "If, then, we are entitled, after the manner of the early Councils, to apply to Him the category of divinity, we are compelled, if we would be true to the facts, to acknowledge that His divinity was self-restrained within the limits and conditions of humanity."³ Forrest, as Thomasius and Gore, considers the *KEVWELIS* as a metaphysical act⁴ in which Christ "in order to become man...made an unspeakable surrender of some divine prerogatives..."⁵ Mackintosh, insisting as he does upon the ethical nature of the passage still admits the necessity of a metaphysical interpretation of the passage: "The crucial fact is that the apostle, even though refraining from speculation as to the relationship to God of the Eternal Son, does not

1 Gore, Dissertations, p. 91.

2 Forrest, Op. Cit., p. 99.

3 Ibid., p. 100.

4 The lack of "technical exactness" mentioned above does not affect the metaphysical nature of the act but only the definition of the act. In such a manner Forrest is able legitimately to soften "self-emptying" into "self-restraining."

5 Forrest, Op. Cit., p. 98.

scruple to describe Him as subsisting in, and then giving up, 'a being so in the form of God that to be equal with Him is a thing of nature'. He took a life of manhood through the abdication of infinite glory. And the motif of the passage - metaphysical only so far as it is ethical - lies in the subduing thought that when it was open to Christ so to employ the powers of His inherently Divine dignity as to insist on being worshipped as God, He chose to reach this supreme position, of Lordship acknowledged universally, by the path of lowliness, obedience, and death."¹

Though one must admit several individual interpretations of the *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ*, the general pattern is clear. Commentators and Kenoticists alike find that the primary emphasis of the passage is an ethical one which points to Christ's 'humiliation'. After this point their opinions are divided. The commentators maintain that no specific metaphysical concept was intended in the passage; the Kenoticists maintain that, even though not explicit, this passage crystallizes the doctrine of kenosis which runs throughout the New Testament. Giving the Kenoticists every benefit of the doubt, it would still be true,

¹ Mackintosh, Op. Cit., p. 67.

that a metaphysical, kenotic interpretation of the passage is not inevitable and that substantiation would be needed from Scripture and theology. But such substantiation, as shown in the earlier chapters of this study, is not available.

The fourth critical phrase affecting the kenotic interpretation of the passage is *μορφήν δούλου λαβών* "The best clue to the nature of the riches renounced, the glory foregone, the form laid aside, is the *μορφή δούλου* to which the *μορφή Θεοῦ* stands opposed. We have to consider what was involved in this servile state; and if we find that limitation of divine attributes, such as knowledge, exposure to temptation, liability to the curse pronounced on man for sin, hardships supplying severe tests of obedience, were all involved in it, and necessary to its completeness and thoroughness, - then we may infer that the *μορφή Θεοῦ* forms a contrast to the *μορφή δούλου* in all these respects."¹ "In patristic literature *μορφή δούλου* signifies human nature, as *μορφή Θεοῦ* signifies divine nature. Modern interpreters, on the other hand, are generally agreed that the form of a servant is not to be immediately identified with human nature, but points to some attribute of human nature, either accidental

¹ Bruce, Op. Cit., p. 362.

or essential. Ebrard understands by the phrase, not human nature in its ideal integrity, but human nature as it stands under the consequences of sin. According to this view, the servant-form is something accidental. Liebner gives to the phrase the meaning, the human existence-form, as one of dependence, according to which the attribute denoted is something essential to humanity; for it pertains to man, irrespective of sin, to be under law to God, to be God's servant. Meyer's interpretation is substantially the same. The servant-form signifies the position as a servant not of one who serves in general (both God and man), or of one who serves others (as in Matthew 20:28), or of one who is subject to the will of another (indefinitely), but specially of one who is the servant of God, this being manifestly implied in the contrast to *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων*. As a matter of mere interpretation, Meyer and Liebner are right; but Ebrard's view is theologically correct. The form of a servant is, in point of fact, the state of humanity as it is on earth, subject to death in consequence of sin.¹ Meyer, as indicated, is in agreement.² However, he emphasizes the essential unity of subject as well

1 Bruce, Op. Cit., pp. 362-363.

2 Meyer, Op. Cit., pp. 91-94.

as the obvious contrast of form: "In His external character, after He had laid aside the divine form which He had previously had, there was observed no difference between His appearance and that of a man, although the subject of His appearance was at the same time essentially divine."¹ Vincent agrees with the above arguments and sums up his position as follows: "His [Christ's] likeness to men was real, but it did not express his whole self. The totality of his being could not appear to men, for that would involve the μορφή Θεοῦ."²

Lightfoot's criticism conforms to the positions above and emphasizes the strength of the word δοῦλος which indicates that Christ's manhood was more than just 'form'.³ Kennedy defined the same position in more current terminology: μορφῇ δούλου λαβών. The clause defines ἐκένωσεν. Christ's assumption of the "form" of a δοῦλος does not imply that the innermost basis of His personality, His "ego", was changed, although, indeed, 'there was more in this emptying of Himself than we can think or say' (Rainy, p.119).

Δοῦλος simply describes the humility to which He condescended."⁴ Michael, as well, agrees to the

1 Meyer, Op. Cit., p. 94.

2 Vincent, Op. Cit., p. 95.

3 Lightfoot, Op. Cit., p. 113.

4 Kennedy, Op. Cit., p. 437.

above consensus of opinion.¹ Lohmeyer agrees in principle with the commentators above but emphasizes the primacy of the ethical nature of the kenosis: "So kann das Wort 'Knecht' nur den Sinn haben, dass die äusserste menschliche Niedrigkeit notwendig und von der göttlichen Bedeutung dieser Gestalt gefordert ist. Beides muss also in ihm liegen: Er ist 'Knecht' zum Zeichen menschlicher Niedrigkeit und göttlicher Hoheit."² It is only when the subordinate phrase *ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπου γενόμενος* is introduced that the historical fact of the Incarnation is established. "Die göttliche Gestalt ist in die Geschichte eingetreten; das ist der Sinn dieser Zeile. In ihr ist nur ein anderer Ausdruck des johanneischen Satzes (1,14) gegeben: 'Und das Wort ward Fleisch.'³

Thomasius, after stressing that *μορφή δούλου* referred "nicht der Dienstbarkeit unter Menschen, sondern der geschöpflichen Abhängigkeit von Gott,"⁴ maintains that Christ should be considered "als Mensch - auf gleiche Weise wie die Menschen geworden und geboren, und dem ganzen Habitus nach als Mensch vor den Menschen erfunden. Der Apostel sagt.

1 Michael, Op. Cit., p. 91-92.

2 Lohmeyer, Op. Cit., p. 36.

3 Ibid., pp. 36-37.

4 Thomasius, Op. Cit., p. 150.

auch hier nicht geradezu; er ward Mensch, er nahm menschliche Natur an, weil es ihm gerade um die Existenzform zu thun ist."¹ Gore is short and explicit on the point: "He [the Son] took the form of a servant. Not only so, but He was made in outward appearance like other men and was found in fashion as a man, that is in the transitory quality of our mortality. The 'form', the 'likeness', the 'fashion' of manhood, he took them all."² Gore further defines *μορφή δούλου* as the "human mode of existence."³ Forrest believes that Paul is insisting here that the Incarnation is not just apparent but real: "The one thing perfectly plain is his [Paul's] central and dominating conception of the incomparable self-denial which Christ underwent in His assumption of humanity for our redemption. All that the Apostle does, so to speak, is to raise the question: the answer to it is not to be found here or in any of his Epistles, but in the records that tell the story of Christ's life."⁴ Mackintosh's opinion has already been stated⁵; "He [Christ] took a life

1 Thomasius, Op. Cit., p. 151.

2 Gore, Op. Cit., p. 89.

3 Ibid., fn. 1.

4 Forrest, Op. Cit., pp. 99-100.

5 Above, pp. 231-232.

of manhood through the abdication of infinite glory.... He chose...the path of lowliness, obedience, and death."¹ Mackintosh, in a later passage, makes this definition even more explicit: "Jesus, as man, was possessed of personal individuality. He was not only Man, He was a man....Not merely a man, indeed, but a Jew of the first century."²

Again, as in the first two points, the commentators and the kenoticists are in agreement: the *μορφὴ δούλου* and its subsequent and dependent phrases refer to the real manhood of Christ, to a real and not an apparent Incarnation. It is interesting to note that the Commentators find it possible to arrive at this mutual conclusion without employing the concept of kenosis in the strict, metaphysical sense.

Upon the basis of the above study, it would be exceedingly difficult to establish a convincing Christology upon the basis of the *ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ* described in Paul's letter to the Philippians.

1 Mackintosh, Op. Cit., p. 67.

2 Ibid., pp. 385-386.

The burden of proof for such a Theory would necessarily lie elsewhere.¹ Perhaps the best summary of this exegetical study is contained in a cryptic statement of Bishop Weston's: "There are passages of St. Paul that can be explained in the light of a moderate, relative Kenosis; but there is no passage that cannot be equally well explained in some other way."²

1 H.R. Mackintosh, The Expository Times, Dec. 1909. "The Kenotic view, be it right or wrong, does not in the least depend for its cogency upon one or two passages in St. Paul, even though one of these passages has happened to give a name to the theory as a whole. We have only to place together these two words of Jesus: 'I and the Father are one', and 'Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, neither the Son, but the Father,' to have the problem full upon us." p. 108.

2 Weston, Op. Cit., p. 129.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Summary Statement

There would be little point in reiterating the particular arguments upon which the various Kenotic Theories depend or the criticisms by which they are refuted; these have been made explicit in earlier chapters. Nevertheless, a general, summary statement should be made.

First, from the negative side, it must be stated that the majority of scholars have found the Kenotic Theory an insufficient formula for the doctrine of the Incarnation. "So far as I can see, the formal theory of Kenosis rests upon an altogether insufficient basis both Biblical and historical."¹ The Biblical passages on which the theory depends are open to other interpretations², and there is no doctrinal support earlier than the nineteenth century.³ To this must be added the fact that the Kenotic Theory, in endeavouring to eliminate the logical contradictions which the Chalcedonian Formula entails, has complicated rather than simplified the explanation of Incarnation. However, the important contributions which the Kenotic Theory has made to Christology

1 Sanday, Christology and Personality, p. 173.

2 Above, p. 239.

3 Above, p. 130.

are found not in the structure but in the content of the Theory.

Second, from the positive side, there are three major emphases in current Christology which in great part owe their importance to the Kenotic Theory. "If these theories [Kenotic] approach the subject from the right standpoint their aims are also irreproachable; for they strive to do justice to (1) the Divine Self-sacrifice and (2) the Manhood of Christ."¹ To these two may be added a third. Kenotic Christology provides a descriptive metaphor for one of the most important aspects of the Incarnation - the Self-giving of God. First, by reasserting the Hebraic rather than the Greek conception of the Impassibility and Immutability of God, the Kenoticists have again given place in Christology to the real suffering and Self-sacrifice involved in the Incarnation. The second point is an equally important contribution - an insistence upon the true Manhood of Christ without loss of Divine identity. The Kenotic Theory's "central principle, that the eternal Son or Word in his incarnation by a voluntary act limited himself to a historical human consciousness and human faculties

1 La Touche, The Person of Christ in Modern Thought, p. 352. Also see Relton, A Study In Christology, p. 210.

of knowledge and action has, I believe, proved itself to be the most important fresh contribution to Christology which has been made since the time of Irenaeus."¹ The third point is important, for it marks another permanent contribution of the Kenotic Theory to Christological thinking. "We are not so much concerned to champion the full-blooded Kenotic standpoint as to suggest that the idea of our Lord's Kenosis expresses a Christian insight well worth preserving into the self-giving quality of the divine love."² No theory of the Incarnation can be complete without taking into account the self-giving, the pouring-out, the self-emptying of God for the redemption of man.

- 1 Quick, Doctrines of the Creed, pp. 132-133.
Bishop Weston states: "It should be noticed how much indebted the Church is in fact to the Kenotists for the thought that the subject of manhood must be sought for in the Logos conceived as self-limited. ...It is easy to forget the debt we owe to them;... But the fact is that their main doctrine is an axiom of our modern Christology." The One Christ, pp. 127-128.
- 2 Duthie, God In His World, p. 31.
It is important to notice that such Russian Orthodox theologians as Soloviev, Tareev, Bulgakov, and Gorodetzky advocate Christologies which incorporate the Kenotic metaphor. If there is even to be a dialogue between the Churches of East and West, a knowledge and understanding of the Kenotic metaphor will be necessary.

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